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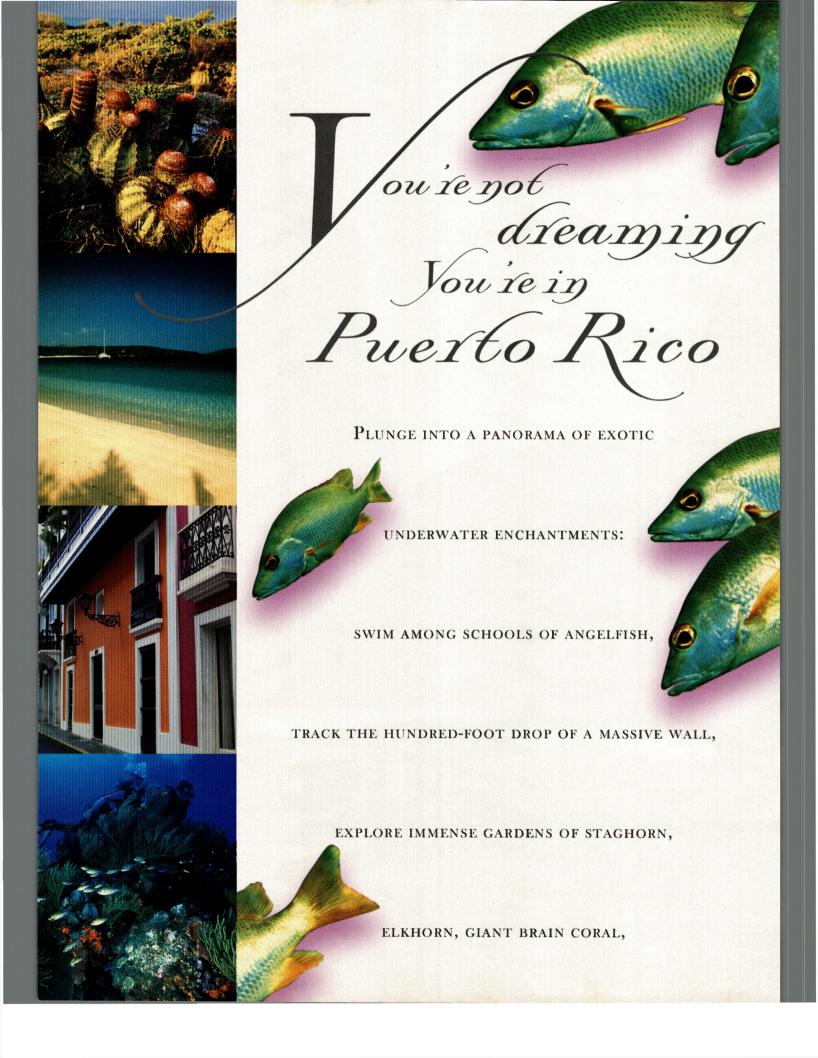
be used – often in ways most people would never imagine. Of course, considering some can take you, a little resourcefulness goes a long way. The Xterra: A million uses and counting.

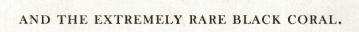
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JOURNEY THROUGH AMAZE OF ANCIENT CAVERNS, ALLEYWAYS, AND

TUNNELS. SPY ON AN OCTOPUS. FOLLOW A SEA TURTLE.

THEN AFTER SUNDOWN, SIT BACK

TO AN EXQUISITE DINNER BY CANDLELIGHT OVERLOOKING

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62 International Dive Travel Directory

Let your fingers do the walking through our ultimate guide to the world's dive destinations, land-based operators, live-aboard vessels and dive travel specialists.

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No wreck is too challenging, no water too murky, no dive too tough for Uncle Sam's elite band of diving rangers.

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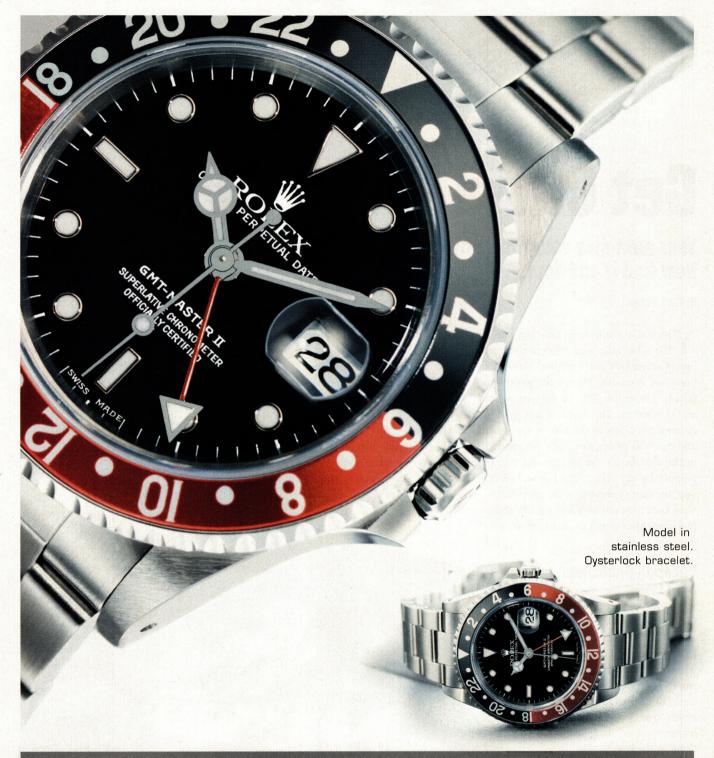
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COVER PHOTO

Goby on star coral photographed by Norbert Wu in Thailand's Similan Islands. Use nitrox and planned deco to get the most out of your dive on the Bahamas' Mt. Olympus, one of our 10 top tech dives. For more, see pg. 31.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Get Outta Town!

Your next dive vacation is inside this magazine. Now find it and book it.

By Buck Butler

Jou know the feeling: You step out of the air-conditioned cabin of a jetliner into blinding light and a tropical blanket of heat and humidity. There's no jetway to take you from the plane to the terminal in sealed comfort. The smell of hot asphalt rises to meet you at the top of the stairs and the roar of engines from the runway rattles the air. It's not exactly the picture painted by the resort brochures, but for you, the scene jump-starts the same adrenaline buzz you got as a kid on Christmas morning. After weeks of anticipation, your dive trip is starting.

Vacation Snapshots

After leaving the airport, you make your way through many more of these familiar scenarios, imprinted on your brain from previous dive trips:

The sun-filled lobby of the small resort, where the desk clerk in the tropical-print shirt hands over your room key and invites you to have a welcome drink at the bar.

The open-air bar, blaring reggae and calypso, where you sip your complimentary fruity drink under makeshift driftwood sculptures and brightly painted signs donated by previous visitors.

The glass case of the dive shop, where you sign waivers over the display of log

books, spare fin straps and other vital but forgettable pieces of gear.

The warmth of the wooden dock under your bare feet as you haul your gear bag to the boat for the first dive.

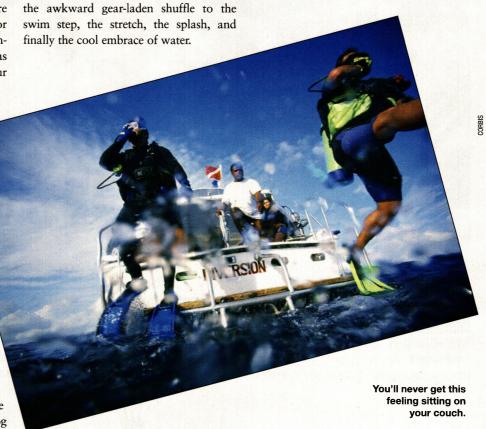
The smell of diesel, the salty spray of water misting your face and the hypnotic rise and fall of the boat motoring to the first site.

The insistent hiss of compressed air,

Remember: If you stay at home, you miss all of this.

Why We Do This

That's why we put together this special issue, our annual International Dive Travel Directory—to get you out of the house. Inside, you'll find guides to the top dive destinations, plus listings and contact information for dive operators, live-aboards and dive travel specialists around the world. Take this guide, pick a destination, do your homework and plan a trip. It's as close to Christmas morning as you're gonna get for the next six months.



UNDERWATER IMAGING GEAR

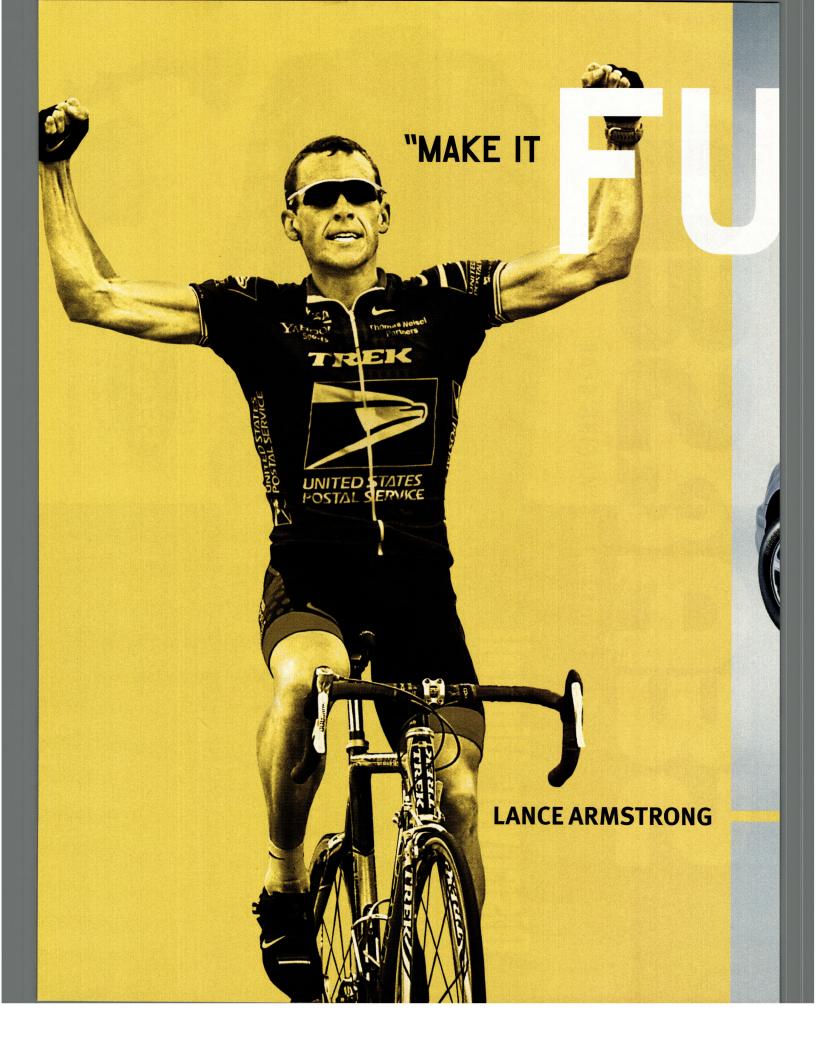
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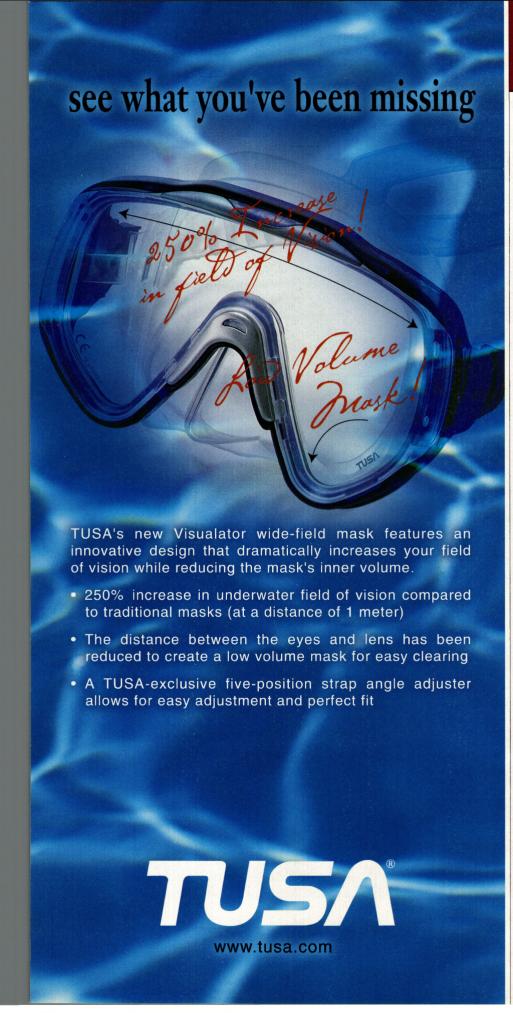
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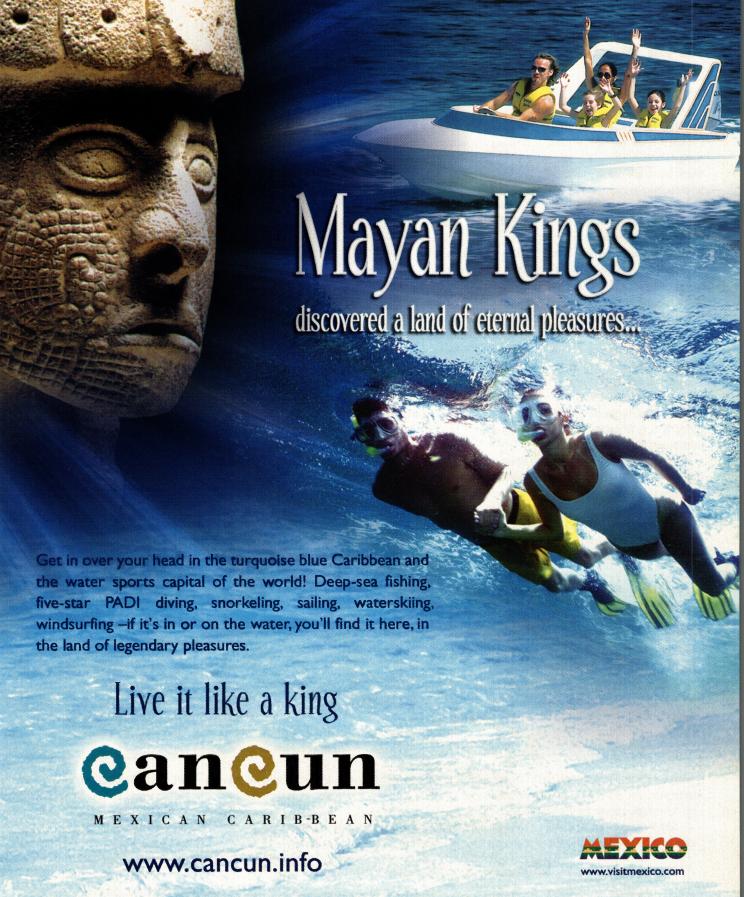
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LETTERS

ANOTHER NAVIGATION TIP

I've just finished reading "Compass Navigation Made Easy" (Feb. '03). We do lots of low-visibility freshwater diving here in Idaho, and we've devised our own simplified system of navigating with a compass. We point the lubber line toward our intended course, set the bezel index mark (O degrees) on the North indicator on the card and head out. When we make our first 90-degree turn, we just turn until the "E" or "W" on the card lines up with the index, then another 90-degree turn and the "S" lines up, and so on. This way you don't have to worry about counting ticks, or which way is plus or minus on the card-iust center "N, S, E, W" on the index mark of zero in rotation as you turn.

Thanks for the best magazine on diving out there—maybe you're still around because you review equipment and destinations for divers, not advertisers.

Robert Treadwell Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Thanks for the tip, Robert. Using the bezel to "remember" the num-

ber of ticks left or right of a cardinal point is a good variation on John Francis's method.

SUMMERTIME, WHEN THE DIVING IS EASY

Lots of us plan vacations during a specific month due to work or family issues and it would be great to know the dive destination that would be ideal for that particular month. For instance, where would you recommend taking a dive trip in July?

Ginny Miller via e-mail

Jetting to the Caribbean in the summertime may not seem like getting away, as it does when wintry weather prevails in much of the U.S., but dive conditions—calm seas and terrific vis—are close to perfect from May through September anywhere in the Caribbean. You might experience some rain, but many days are clear and sunny.

Plus it's the low season, so you should be able to snag decent rates on accommodations. One drawback: Summertime is the Caribbean's hurricane season, but many islands lie outside the hurricane belt—for example, Bonaire and Tobago.

For descriptions of the world's top dive destinations and a listing of the operators who can show you the dive sites, turn to our annual "International Dive Travel Directory" on page 62.



HEALTHY TIRES

Having never dived in Bonaire, I might have been tempted to do so based on the fact that it's the top choice for "Healthiest Marine Environment" ("Top 100 Readers' Choice Awards," Jan./Feb. '03). However, I was somewhat taken aback by the photo you chose to represent this pristine dive spot. If the best photo you could dig up had a big, ugly tire in the background, then a really healthy marine environment must indeed be rare.

Dale Folsom Marrero, La.

That's what we thought too. Dale. the first time we dived Bonaire's world-renowned Town Pier, where the photo was taken. But there's a reason Bonaire dive operators don't always remove tires from under the pier. Many of us here have been lucky enough to attend the annual Bonaire Dive Festival (this year, June 14-21); the annual Town Pier cleanup is a featured event every vear. Event coordinator Dee Scarr always cautions participants to leave old tires and other manmade homes on the bottom-usually because a critter calls it home, sweet home. In fact, one of Dee's jobs is to check all trash that divers haul up to ensure an animal hasn't become trapped. Last year, she rescued a tiny reef squid from a glass bottle.

TRAINING TIP FROM SCUBADIVING.COM Customized Dive Slate Maps

We'd like to put the map we did of our local training site onto a dive slate so that it might actually be of use. Ideally, there'd be a grid on the back of the slate that would be used to track the students in a class, as well as the time in/time out, max depth, bottom time and safety stop info. Does anyone know of a company that could produce dive slates with an image on each side?

Everett McCassey, Cornwall, N.Y.

You could use waterproof paper and a copying machine to make copies of the map. Then you'll have the map for underwater use, and you can save the written-on copies for filing, putting in dive logs or whatever, without having to manually transfer the information.

Size the map to fit a standard dive slate, cut out copies of it (you should be able to get more than one slate-sized copy on an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper), and then use rubber bands to attach it to the dive slate.

Jim Grier, Fargo, N.D.

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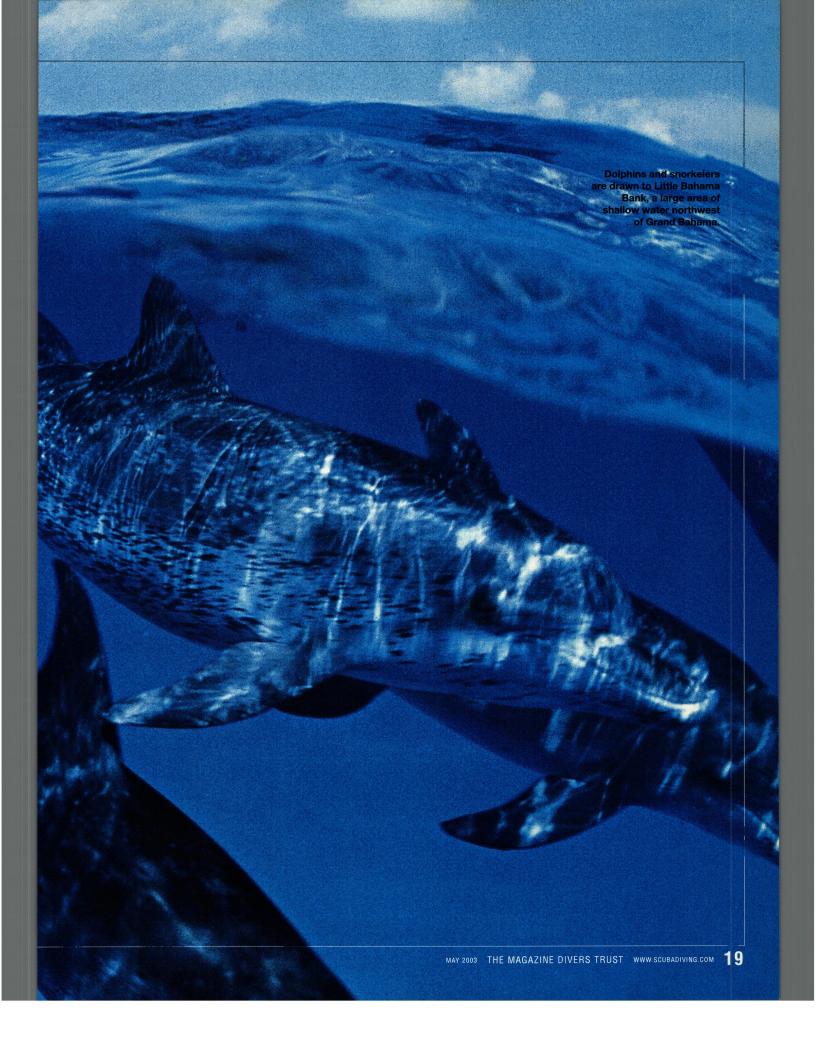
LITTLE BAHAMA BANK, BAHAMAS

Atlantic Spotted Dolphins

A live-aboard making its way to the shallow white sand flats of Little Bahama Bank will often be met by a pod of Atlantic spotted dolphins sprinting alongside. As snorkelers slip into the water to be greeted by the clicks and whistles of high-spirited dolphins, the scene is like recess on a school playground. Sometimes just one or two come to play; other times, as many as 30 dolphins are in the water. They stay to cavort from two minutes to two hours, but if you want them to stay longer, it helps to behave like a rambunctious 10-year-old-make goofy noises, swim as fast as you can, mimic their movements.

Pack your mask, fins, snorkel, bathing suits and towels. Bring along decent snorkel skills—and extra patience. The boat crew will make every effort to locate a pod, but this trip doesn't come with a money-back guarantee. A number of Bahamas live-aboards offer seven-day excursions, May through September.

— Text and photography by James D. Watt



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SEAVIEWS

ENVIRONMENT

Living in the Bubble

How microscopic plankton rule the seas.

Look inside a single drop of seawater and you'll find dozens of microscopic plants and animals collectively known as plankton. And while these tiny creatures seem insignificant, they form the base of the entire ocean food chain, sustaining nearly all marine life, from coral to sharks and whales.

The word plankton is derived from the Greek word for wanderer, and it describes perfectly the life of the more than 10,000 species of plankton. They drift helplessly on ocean currents for their entire life, which usually ends with being devoured as food or expended in the bio-chemical processes that regulate the ocean climate.

Plankton fall into two categories: Phytoplankton, tiny plantlike algae that are the ocean's primary producers of food energy; and zooplankton, tiny marine animals that consume phytoplankton in the first step up the food chain.

Phytoplankton capture sunlight for photosynthesis,

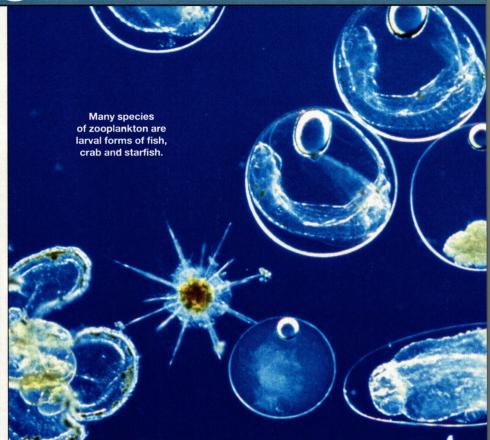


converting carbon dioxide and inorganic substances into food molecules and oxygen. The food molecules are passed up the food chain, and photosynthesis helps regulate Earth's climate by removing an estimated 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide a year.

Divers may not always appreciate phytoplankton because of decreased visibility caused by seasonal growth spurts called blooms. Some blooms, such as red tides, produce toxins that poison fish and contaminate shellfish. On the other hand, certain phytoplankton species produce those beautiful displays of bioluminescent light.

Some species of zooplankton, such as the tiny crustaceans called copepods, spend their entire lives as plankton. Others are larval fish, crab and starfish that eventually grow to adults. Pooled by currents, concentrated masses of zooplankton are the primary food source for some of the largest ocean predators, including whale sharks, basking sharks, manta rays and baleen whales.

—LANCE LEONHARDT



ENVIRONMENT

Too Tasty to Survive?

The fight to save California's last abalone.

Three years in prison.

Joel Roberts' family wept when the judge read his sentence. His crime? He'd illegally taken 130 red abalone, California's delectable and increasingly rare mollusk.

Victims of disease and decades of overharvesting by commercial and recreational divers, abalone have all but vanished from Southern California waters. By 1997, the only healthy ab stocks were in Northern California, where divers have long been restricted to free-diving for abalone, creating a de facto abalone reserve in deeper waters.

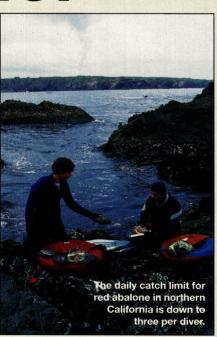
Now, even Northern California's abalone are in trouble. And as the mollusks become increasingly scarce, their value increases. With farmraised abalone fetching \$50 to \$100 a pound,

poachers can make quick profits undercutting legitimate suppliers. Roberts' poached abalones were worth perhaps \$10,000.

Determined not to repeat the debacle in Southern California, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) has reduced the daily abalone limit from four to three, and the annual limit from 100 to 24.

State officials are also turning to volunteer organizations such as the Sonoma County Abalone Network (SCAN) to help educate wellmeaning recreational divers while they go after commercial poachers with high-tech gearincluding thermal-imaging scopes to spot people diving illegally at night—and an undercover unit that infiltrates poaching rings.

-PAMELA TURNER





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OUR BEST ADVICE

Family Diving Made Easy

Seven tips for certifying loved ones.

You sacrifice a lot for your family—but give up diving? Not a chance. Fortunately, you don't have to. Scuba is one of the most family-friendly sports around, so this summer, skip the plastic theme parks and show your spouse and kids the real magic kingdom of the underwater world. Here are seven tips for certifying your loved ones.

- MAKE SURE THEY'RE ON BOARD. This may come as a shock, but scuba is not for everyone. And that's OK. Don't push loved ones into scuba if they aren't ready.
- MAKE SURE THEY'RE OLD ENOUGH. All certifying agencies will give an adult open-water certification at age 15, and a junior open-water card at age 12—some at age 10. And there are introductory experiences starting at age 8: PADI's "Bubblemaker" and "Seal Team" programs, SSI's "Scuba Rangers" and SDI's "Future Buddies," for example.
- **§ FIND THE RIGHT INSTRUCTOR.** Look for a patient instructor who is willing to work with a spouse or children who need extra help.
- TRUST THE INSTRUCTOR. Having made your choice, trust the instructor's judgment. It's ultimately his call as to whether your spouse and kids have the physical and emotional maturity to complete the course.

• INVEST IN GEAR. Your hand-me-downs won't cut it. New divers need their own gear to



REFRESHER COURSE

No Air, No Spare

Slack maintenance and poor dive planning lead to a close call.

THE STORY: "I no longer dive with rental equipment and here's why. Seven minutes into a recent overseas dive, airflow from my rental regulator began decreasing and getting wet. By the time I got the instructor's attention (he was my assigned buddy even though he was teaching five students), the regulator simply quit working. I gave the outof-air signal, but instead of handing me his spare regulator, he signaled me to go up. It was then I noticed that he didn't even have a spare reg. I exhaled my way 50 feet up to the surface. I just thank God that I made it without injury."

-JEAN-CLAUDE T.

THE SOLUTION: Rental regulators are very reliable if given normal care and maintenance. Obviously, you got a dud and you've already identified the best course of action for avoiding bad rental gear—bring your own.

However, the root of your close call has less to do with poor gear maintenance than it does sloppy pre-dive procedures—yours and the shop's. Since the shop's failures are pretty obvious, let's go over yours.

If your dive partner can't actively assist you in an emergency, he is a buddy in name only. When you agreed to "buddy up" with an instructor teaching five students, you were effectively diving solo. You should have recognized that fact and either skipped the dive or taken steps to facilitate self-rescue, including a fully redundant air supply.

It was also your responsibility to do a pre-dive check that includes locating your buddy's octopus—or lack thereof—and reviewing emergency procedures.

Finally, it was your responsibility to check the performance of life-support equipment before the dive began. In a case of complete regulator failure such as this, there would have been detectable signs of trouble on the surface.

Thank God for your escape, Jean-Claude, but blame yourself for the near miss as much as you blame the dive shop and the regulator.

-JOHN FRANCIS

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SEAVIEWS



The dive docs say you can keep on diving.

Recreational divers who continue to dive beyond middle age should be able to do so without concern based solely on advancing age, says a new university study.

Normal aging includes a gradual decline in pulmonary function, but this alone is not serious enough to keep seniors who are otherwise healthy on deck, Duke University researchers reported in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*.

In the first physiological study of heart and lung function in older divers, Dr. Richard Moon, clinical director of Duke's Center for Hyperbaric Medicine and Environmental Physiology, simulated dives at a depth of 60 feet while measuring gases in the bloodstreams of both younger and older participants. The researchers sought to determine the effect of age on the body's ability to balance oxygen and carbon dioxide under the water pressures experienced during recreational dives.

The study, funded by the Divers Alert Network, concluded that while older divers do experience increased levels of retained carbon dioxide, the amount is clinically insignificant when compared to younger subjects.

— DOUGLAS PAGE

ENVIRONMENT

It's a Small Ocean, After All

Grand Cayman teens help preserve reefs—in Fiji.

In a world full of fatalistic environmental news, success stories seem few and far between. But a group of Cayman teenagers has shown that environmental solutions can really be quite simple.

Through the conservation group Seacology,

students at John Gray High School on Grand Cayman have helped create a 17square-mile marine park off the remote Fijian village of Naikorokoro on the island of Ovalau.

The Cayman students are all members of the John Gray Recycling Club, a conservation group advocating reef protection on their home island. The club recently won a prestigious Commonwealth Youth Award from the Cayman government, a prize that comes with a stipend of about \$1,600. Instead of keeping the cash, the students decided to

donate it to a Seacology project to build a muchneeded kindergarten in
Naikorokoro. "We thought we could help people who would not normally have the means to protect their coral reefs." says club president

Jeremy Forbes. In exchange, the village has agreed to establish a no-fishing reserve on their ancestral reefs.

"The fact that young people in the Cayman Islands, which are known far and wide for their beautiful coral reefs, are raising funds to preserve the coral reefs of a village halfway around the world is remarkable," says Seacology Executive Director Duane Silverstein. "Adults have a lot to learn from this student-inspired model of international cooperation."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

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locks. Also available in 3mm and 6.5mm. PRICE: \$80.

CONTACT: www deepseeinc.com.



Lighter weight and offering more flexibility than the Orca Purge, Deep See's Safe Sole booties are made of Seeflex nylon II neoprene with vulcanized rubber and low-profile grip pads. Like the Orca Purge, Safe Sole booties are cut high to minimize water exchange. With rubber toes and heel caps, zipper locks and fin strap tabs. Also available in 3mm and 6.5mm. PRICE: \$50. CONTACT: www.deepseeinc.com.

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Good Breeding

The secret sex lives of yellowhead jawfish.

One of nature's most interesting displays of the biological imperative to reproduce is exhibited each spring and summer by the yellowhead jawfish.

Adult yellowheads are three to four inches long and found in the sand flats and rubble areas near coral reefs at around 50 to 80 feet. The fish usually hover above burrows and live within a foot or so of their monogamous

Here's the kinky part: From late spring to early fall, you can often find the male yellowhead incubating fertilized eggs in his oversized mouth. These proudand dedicated—fathers incubate egg clutches for five- to seven-day periods. Every so often, the fathers spit the eggs out and quickly suck them back in. This churning removes waste and ensures even water flow around the entire clutch.

Expectant fathers are particularly skittish, but with a bit of patience and slow movements, you can get as close as one foot before they retreat into their burrows.

> —TEXT AND PHOTO BY CARLOS VILLOCH

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ADVANCED DIVING

10 Great Dives for Techies

Put those tech-diving skills to use on these amazing sites.

by Michael Ange

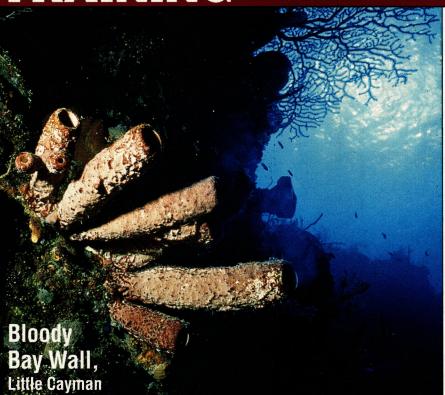
ne of the questions I hear most often from newly certified tech divers is: "So where can I put these skills to use?" Answer: Lots of places, including many you already know and love.

Tech diving isn't always about going to extreme depths or locales-sometimes it's about staying longer at traditional sport diving depths and sites. Think of it this way: technical skills allow recreational divers to expand the boundaries of where, how, how deep and how long they dive. Many "traditional" recreational sites are also excellent tech divesbut the tech diver enjoys a thorough look, while divers following no-deco depths and times get only a brief glimpse.

With that in mind, here are 10 great dives for beginning techies.

Dive with the hammerheads of Cocos Island's Dirty Rock on a semi-closed rebreather to get more bottom time and less decompression.

RAINING



Depth: 120 to 160 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression and advanced nitrox.

Bloody Bay Wall is renowned for its vibrant reefs and an abundance of tropical marine life at traditional sport diving depths. Well, guess what: It's pretty great down deeper, too.

The wall drops well over 1,000 feet, but for the beginning tech diver, I recommend a dive to 150 feet for 20 minutes, leaving you with only nine minutes of deco on air. If you're advanced nitrox certified, you can gain a physiological advantage by breathing 38 percent nitrox (available from shops on Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac) on the deco stops. Another option: Make the entire dive on 27 percent nitrox and cut your deco time to six minutes.

Dirty Rock, cocos island, **COSTA RICA**

Depth: 140 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression, advanced nitrox and rebreather certifica-

The next hot spot on our list-Dirty Rock—is predator central. A deepwater pinnacle off Cocos Island, it's known for its schooling hammerhead sharks and a prolific list of marine life, including eagle and manta rays, whitetip sharks, sea turtles, silky sharks and enormous schools of jacks. Dirty Rock tops out at 65 feet, and while divers on air and standard recreational nitrox blends spend the bulk of their dive at this depth, divers trained and equipped for deco diving can drop down to the ledge at 140 and take in the entire ecosystem.

semi-closed on rebreathers also helps divers get the most out of Cocos. Diving in stealth mode lets you drop onto sites like Lone Stone and watch as schools of curious hammerheads sweep in over your head. In addition to a more intimate interaction, rebreather divers also benefit from a very extended gas supply and longer bottom times with a shorter decompression obligation.

USCG Cutter Bibb, KEY LARGO, FLA.

Depth: 140 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression, advanced nitrox and wreck penetration.

This 327-foot Coast Guard cutter lies intact on her starboard side, and the wreck is both a slice of history and a haven for marine life. Descending on the mooring lines, you'll pass through schools of barracuda lined up along the ship that guarded Allied trans-Atlantic convoys from deadly U-boat attacks in World War II, and served in the Battle of Okinawa. It takes just a little imagination to see the activity on her bridge and feel the presence of her crew.

Though still in the range of traditional sport diving depths, no-deco profiles give you just 10 to 13 minutes to explore this large wreck. A basic decompression profile allows you the chance to explore the exterior at a more leisurely pace. Hanging wires and other entanglements, along with the size, age and the tilt of the wreck, also challenge wreck penetration divers.

USS Curb, KEY WEST, FLA. Depth: 140 to 190 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression, advanced nitrox, wreck penetration—and for the more adventurous, extended range

In Key West, you'll find the USS Curb, a U.S. Navy tug lying on a sandy bottom in clear, warm water. The most interesting parts of this dive are found between 140 and 165 feet, requiring a staged decompression profile to explore the exterior fully and wreck penetration training to explore the interior of this vessel.

As divers descend through the water column, the hull of the ship seems to be undulating. Descend a few more feet, and the school of bait fish that conceal the hull will part so that you can see the actual structure of the wreck. The Curb is virtually untouched by divers and many artifacts still remain. The interior compartments are loaded with schools of yellowtails, angelfish and juvenile jacks. They're also home to a resident 300-pound jewfish.

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Hydro Atlantic, FT. LAUDERDALE, FLA.

Depth: 175 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression, advanced nitrox and wreck penetration.

One of the most picturesque natural shipwrecks on the East Coast is off Ft. Lauderdale. The *Hydro Atlantic* was being towed to a salvage yard when she sank in a storm in 175 feet just off Hillsborough Inlet. Close your eyes and imagine a shipwreck—towering masts above a flat deck covered with marine life and circled by large barracuda. Add strong Gulf Stream currents and you've conjured the *Hydro Atlantic*.

At a depth of 150 feet, penetration divers will find large open areas in the superstructure. A popular penetration route through the vessel starts on the forward side near the center of the vessel, where the interior decks are loaded with marine life seeking a respite from the swift currents. A typical dive profile of 20 minutes in these compartments can be followed by a slow ascent up the vessel's rigging structures (actual bottom time of 30 minutes), and will result in about 32 minutes of decompression time. Or use 27 percent nitrox and cut the deco time to 26 minutes.

Mount Olympus, Grand Bahama Island

Depth: 110-plus feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression and advanced nitrox.

Accessible by live-aboard, this remote mountain of living coral is shot through with caves and swim-throughs that start in 80 feet of water. Descend through a living kaleidoscope of color and you'll exit at depths at 100 feet or more. To explore this amazing seascape fully, you'll need more bottom time than is allowed by traditional sport diving limits. Use 32 percent nitrox for dives up to 40 minutes in duration with only 15 minutes of deco, and you'll still be making new discoveries while your deco-challenged buddies are sitting on the boat.

U-352, COASTAL NORTH CAROLINA

Depth: 115 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression and advanced nitrox.

No trip to the wrecks of the North Carolina coast would be complete without a visit to the *U-352*. This German wreck lies in 115 feet of water and is accessible to recreational divers, but a simple, beginner-friendly deco profile can dramatically extend your bottom time.

This U-boat was sent to her grave by the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Icarus* in 1942. She went down with loss of life and remains today as evidence of a turning point in the Battle of the Atlantic. This wreck is a war grave and out of respect, penetration is strongly discouraged. Additionally, these World War II-era diesel-powered subs are quite confined inside and penetration is, at best, a hazardous endeavor.

Nippo Maru, Truk Lagoon, Micronesia

Depth: 100 to 165 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression, advanced nitrox and wreck penetration.

Tech divers who appreciate World War II relics in the Atlantic will also be moved by Truk Lagoon's relics from the war in the Pacific. Truk features many excellent dive sites, but the *Nippo Maru* is one of the best for beginning tech divers.

As you descend to the wreck's main deck at 130 feet, the most prominent fea-

Papoose, Coastal North Carolina

Depth: 130 feet.

Recommended training: Full decompression and advanced nitrox.

You don't have to travel all the way to the Pacific to see sharks. The *Papoose* is a casualty of World War II lying in 130 feet of water off the North Carolina coast. This wreck is shallow enough to be accessed for very limited duration dives by advanced recreational divers; however, if you're trained and equipped for basic deco diving, this wreck still yields a few artifacts and during mid- to late summer, it is teeming with sand tiger sharks. While the traditional recreational diver will have to call it quits after only 13 minutes on the bottom, the deco diver can more than double his bottom time—racking up 30 minutes with only a 14-minute stop. If you're a penetration diver, beware the heavy oil sludge that still coats portions of the interior.



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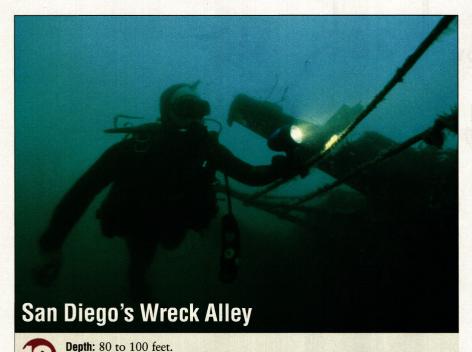
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TRAINING



Recommended training: Decompression procedures and wreck penetration. When divers think tech diving, they usually think deep. However, the sites of Wreck Alley provide an excellent example of great shallow dives made better when you can extend bottom times and use penetration skills that allow for more complete exploration.

In only 80 feet of water, the El Rey is a prime example and a beautiful spot for macro photography. A decade on the sea floor has left this artificial reef covered with strawberry-colored anemones, gorgonians, bryozoans and several species of starfish. However, her most striking feature is the covering of orange, brown and green cup corals that carpet sections of the wreck. Take advantage of extended bottom times with nitrox gases or staged decompression to get the best photo for your collection.

If wreck penetration is your interest, dive the 366-foot Yukon. A more recent artificial reef, this Canadian destroyer escort lies on her port side in 100 feet of water, but the size of the wreck and numerous man-made access holes make her an excellent penetration dive.

ture is a Japanese battle tank poised as though it were still ready for battle and clearly identifying this ship's deadly intent as she sailed from Japan. The engine room telegraph still stands ready for action on the bridge, providing an excellent photo opportunity.

Like all the wrecks in Truk, this one is loaded with both prolific marine life and historical artifacts that add to the surreal feeling as you swim across her decks and inside her structure. This site provides penetration potential and a wealth of photo/video opportunities.

The Bottom Line

The technical profiles outlined here all require-at minimum-certification in decompression procedures (see "Get With the Program"). They should not be attempted without proper training and equipment.

Clearly, this level of diving is not for everyone, but isn't that the point? In every sport there is a cutting edge that requires an adventurous spirit. If you are possessed of that spirit, the adventure of technical diving is well within your reach.

Get With the Program: **Tech Training Explained**

Full Decompression. These courses have several names, including Decompression Procedures and Deep Air, and generally allow dives to a maximum depth of 150 feet. Deco profiles in this depth range can usually be completed in single tank dive gear with an extra stage cylinder of 30 to 40 cubic feet.

Advanced Nitrox. Basic nitrox courses train divers to use nitrox mixes of up to 40 percent oxygen. Advanced Nitrox courses expand this to include up to 100 percent oxygen. These mixes, commonly referred to as hot mixes or hyperoxic mixes, are used to extend bottom times at traditional depths (for example, a 60foot dive on EAN50 for 150 minutes without deco stops) or to accelerate or improve the efficiency of decompression stops. Advanced Nitrox courses require divers to have an oxygen-clean cylinder and regulator.

Extended Range. These courses expand upon the skills listed above to take divers to a maximum depth of around 180 feet on air using separate tanks of hyperoxic mixes for decompression. Courses generally require twin cylinders or a high-capacity single (98 cubic feet or larger) with H-valves and an oxygen-clean stage bottle.

Limited Penetration Wreck Diving. Recreational courses that train divers to do simple swim-throughs, usually in open holds or superstructure areas, only. These courses are available from most traditional recreational agencies and can be completed in recreational gear with a few added accessories.

Full Penetration Wreck Diving. Offered by tech training agencies, these courses train divers to penetrate any portion of a shipwreck. Sometimes called Advanced Wreck and Technical Wreck, they require twin cylinders, a primary reel, a safety reel, a primary light and two backup lights. Depending on the agency or the wreck, you may also need stage bottles and other accessories.

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INSTRUCTIONAL

Seven Secrets For Safer Diving

How to double your safety and practice important skills. Bonus: you waste no time, no air.

By John Francis

If they give an award for Best Advice ■ Widely Ignored, a top contender after "Save part of every paycheck" has got to be: "Take time out on every dive to practice safety skills."

Before that C-card is very old, most of us have forgotten our good intentions to, say, practice air sharing frequently or double-check every piece of equipment before every dive.

After all, who does homework after the final exam? Who wastes precious bottom time and air on some silly drill? Not you, and not me either. But I've found seven ways we can all build more safety into our dives and practice some emergency skills without wasting time or air. Best of all, no one will notice!

They're little things, like:

Skill #1 Check tank valves. You and your buddy have geared up, checked each other in the normal manner and are standing at the entry door. He lifts one leg in a figure 4 to put on a fin, maybe putting a hand on your shoulder for balance.

Sound familiar? Instead, do it this way: When your buddy starts to make that figure 4, grab his tank valve with one hand to steady him, and at

Got time to kill on a safety stop? Why not practice air sharing with your buddyskill #4.

the same time check that the valve is fully open. (It's surprising how often divers forget.) With your other hand, you can grab the boat railing for support.

Your buddy can use his other hand to grab your shoulder if he needs to. Then your buddy grabs and checks your tank valve while you put on your fins. This keeps both of you steadier, reminds both of you to open your tank valves fully and wastes no time.

Double-check: Just before you step off, take one deep breath while watching your pressure gauge. The needle shouldn't move at all.

Got the idea? It takes no extra time, effort or air, you do nothing unusual and you both practically eliminate the chance of going in the water with the tank turned off.

HOW TO OPEN A TANK VALVE

You think you know? Maybe not. Many divers were taught to open the valve all the way, then back up a quarter turn. However, this may be a bad idea because it leaves the valve somewhere between fully open and fully closed. If you've accidentally closed the valve then opened it a quarter turn, the reg may breathe at the surface, giving no warning that the valve is nearly closed.

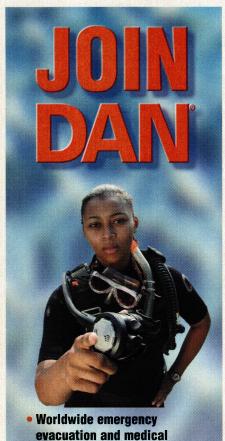
Instead, open the valve all the way until you touch the stop-you don't need to put muscle to it. Now, if you've mistakenly closed the valve instead of opened it, it will be obvious with the first breath or touch of the purge button. Just be sure you take that first breath before you take the first step off the boat. Watch your pressure gauge—it will drop like a stone if the tank valve is accidentally closed.

Skill #2 Double your gauge checks.

Here's a corner a lot of us cut once we get comfortable in the water: we don't check our gauges. By far the most common cause of low-air and out-of-air emergencies is simply the failure to check gauges often.

Regulators do fail, but very rarely. More often, we get absorbed in the dive, use air faster than usual (because we are deep or swimming hard) and fail to notice





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TRAINING

we're getting low on air.

Do this: Whenever you do think of checking your gauges, signal your buddy to check his. Whenever he thinks of checking his gauges, he should signal you to check yours. Whenever the two of you make eye contact, for whatever reason, let that be a reminder to check gauges. Whenever you notice anyone checking gauges, check yours. These reminders will at least double the number of gauge checks each of you makes.

It costs, maybe, two seconds? And who's going to notice?

HOW TO CHECK GAUGES

Whenever you check psi, also check depth, bottom time and nitrogen loading-in that order. Making a routine of checking psi first, depth second, time third and nitrogen loading fourth, every time, makes it an effortless habit.

Skill #3 Practice stopping your ascent. Buoyancy control while ascending

is one of those skills many divers never master. As a result, most of us ascend more quickly than the recommended 30 feet per

their ascent rate at all in the last 30 feet, when a slow ascent is most important.

The leading reason: Many divers fail to establish neutral buoyancy before they begin their ascents. They start ascending while positive and chase neutral buoyancy, unsuccessfully, all the way up. "Often," says scuba instructor trainer Tec Clark, "they go directly from the exploration phase of their dive to the ascent to the safety stop, without transitions between, where they might regroup and establish control over their buoyancy."

Do this instead:

Stop before you begin your ascent. When you reach the agreed time or psi to begin your ascent, make buddy contact and check gauges. Establish neutral buoyancy. Check each other's gear. Make sure cameras, lights, etc. are clipped in or otherwise put away.

Monitor your ascent rate—and your buddy's. As you both begin to ascend, monitor your own ascent rate indicator and use it to control not only your rate but your



and check gauges. Establish neutral buoyancy. Check each other's gear. Make sure cameras, lights, etc. are clipped in or otherwise put away.

Monitor your ascent rate—and your buddy's. As you both begin to ascend, monitor your own ascent rate indicator and use it to control not only your rate but your buddy's as well. If he starts rising above you, tug his fin or BC as a gentle reminder to slow down. Your buddy should do the same for you, which means two pairs of eyes are watching ascent rates and the slowest diver controls the ascent.

Stop again at 30 feet. A brief stop at the edge of the crucial offgassing range accomplishes several things: You re-establish neutral buoyancy before entering the zone where buoyancy changes most rapidly, so you minimize the chance of an uncontrolled ascent; you orient yourself to your surroundings-to other divers and boat traffic. For example, you may see a crowd of divers headed to the safety stop and may want to wait a while to avoid the crowd. And you may reduce your DCS risk. When ascending from depths greater than 60 feet, a brief stop at 30 feet is like a precautionary deco stop or an extra safety stop. It can't hurt, and it might help.

OK, it takes an extra minute. It's worth it.

HOW TO ASCEND SLOWLY

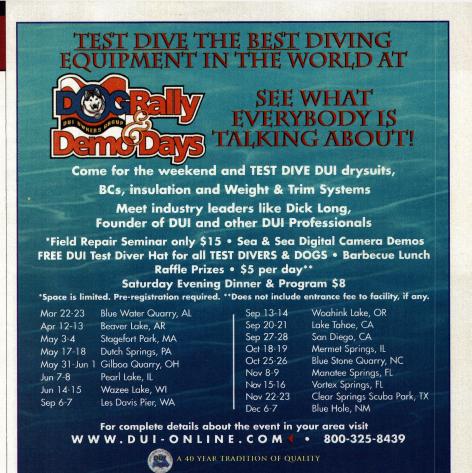
Get neutral first. Establish neutral buoyancy before you initiate your ascent.

Kick up. Start your ascent by kicking to overcome neutral buoyancy, not by adding air to your BC.

Watch your gauges. Keep your ascent indicator in plain sight. Keep one hand free so you can hold it in front of you for the entire

Bleed air early and often. Begin bleeding air from your BC as soon as you start up and before your ascent rate becomes too fast. Start dumping air before it becomes apparent that you need to.

Focus on preventing a fast rate, not curing it. If you have to fin gently all the way to the surface to keep ascending, that's fine and safer than a positively buoyant ascent.





TRAINING

Face your buddy as you ascend. By looking over each other's shoulders, you have a 360-degree view of your surroundings.

Skill #4 Practice air sharing. Instead of staring off into oblivion for the three- to five-minute safety stop, put the time to a

good use—practice sharing air with your buddy, by whatever method you've agreed upon before the dive. Repeat the whole drill, as you learned it in class, beginning with the proper signal to your buddy. After you've taken a few breaths and gotten comfortable, give your buddy's air source back and change roles.

Don't cut corners. If you practice the drill the same way every time, you will be able to perform it automatically when you really need it. And look at the silver lining: The whole drill will help you pass the time during the safety stop.

HOW TO SHARE AIR

Step 1: Signal your buddy that you're low on air and want to share.

Step 2: Your buddy moves toward you and offers an air source, either his primary or his secondary depending on his equipment configuration.

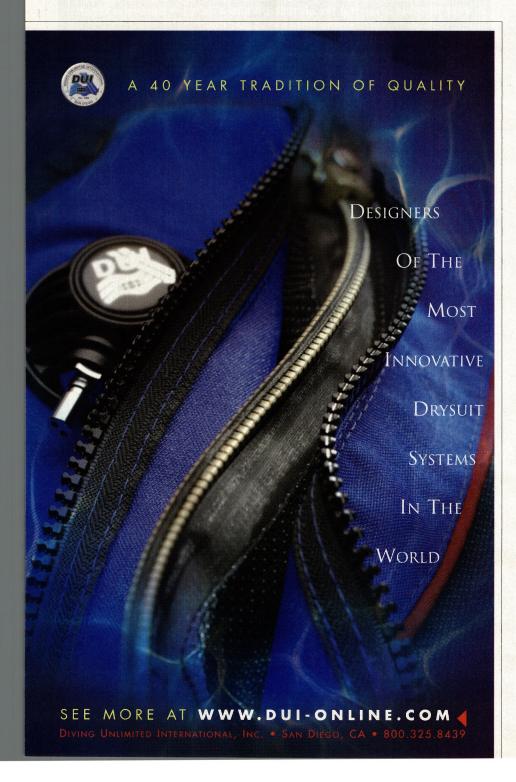
Step 3: Put the offered reg in your mouth right side up, purge it, and begin breathing normally.

Step 4: Make physical contact, by grabbing your buddy's arm or BC strap or tank valve, so you don't drift apart and pull the reg from your mouth. (See illustration, pg. 38.)

A FEW CAUTIONS. HOWEVER:

- Always review the drill before the dive, so each of you knows which air sources to use.
- Watch your buoyancy. Don't become so absorbed in the air-sharing drill that you start ascending.
- Inform the divemaster before the dive. If he doesn't know you're practicing, he will assume a real emergency. That may distract his attention from someone who really needs help.
- Think twice before practicing "buddy breathing" techniques where both divers share one regulator. Experience has shown this to be a somewhat dangerous procedure unless practiced frequently. If buddy breathing is going to be your air-sharing method, agree on it in advance, think through the steps and practice it "dry" first.

swimming ascent from 15 feet. Nearly your last resort when out of air is to make an emergency swimming ascent, but divers rarely practice it except in certification classes. In fact, some instructors are reluctant to encourage practicing this skill, fearing the practice itself may be danger-



is the safest time to practice this skill because you are close to the surface, calm and have air.

Do be careful, however. Keep your regulator in your mouth and keep control of your buoyancy and ascent rate. Essentially, you should be making a normal ascent except that you practice exhaling all the way to the surface.

For more safety, take turns with your buddy. On the first dive, you practice the ascent while your buddy watches for your bubbles and monitors your rate. On the next dive, he practices and you watch him.

HOW TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY SWIMMING ASCENT

Step 1: Keep your reg in your mouth.
Instead of inhaling, exhale slowly making an "ahhh" sound.

Step 2: Ascend at a normal rate. At 30 feet per minute, you have 30 seconds to reach the surface from 15 feet. This should be ample. In fact, you'll probably find more air in your lungs, not less, as you ascend. If you do run out of air, take another breath rather than rushing the ascent. A safe ascent rate is more important than completing an exercise. Next time, exhale more slowly.

Note: This is not an emergency buoyant ascent, which involves dumping weights and ascending as quickly as possible.

Skill #6 Practice the tired diver tow.

Remember practicing the tired diver tow in your open-water certification class? Haven't done it since, have you? To practice this useful skill, surface 50 feet or so from the dive platform so you can tow your buddy halfway, then he can tow you. Or, if you surface at the platform because you've been using an ascent line, swim out and back a few yards. In either case, a very short distance is enough. Remember, your goal is to practice, not make yourselves tired. If there is any current at the boat, surface up-current so you don't have to fight it, or surface at the boat and swim up-current first.

OK, other divers will notice you doing this one. Get over it. By the way, the boat

crew will notice too. Let them know in advance so no one dives in to "help." That would be real embarrassment.

HOW TO TOW A TIRED DIVER

Step 1: Inflate both BCs so both divers can relax and breathe surface air if necessary and feel secure. A tired diver is often an anx-

of 500+ hours on a set of batteries.

ious diver.

Step 2: Towed diver lies on his back, with legs stretched out.

Step 3: Roll onto your side, parallel to and facing the towed diver, as if swimming a sidestroke.

Step 4: Grab his armpit or hook your arm in

(continued on p. 45)

MADE IN USA



TRAINING

Three Alternative Tows

In all cases, the victim should be on his back with lots of buoyancy to keep his face out of the water. Drop accessories that will cause drag.



Leg Push

Lying on your stomach, you put the victim's fins on your shoulders and grab his knees to stiffen his legs. This allows you to watch his face, see where you're going and use a full, normal kick. Over a long distance, it is more efficient than the side-by-side tow.



Tank Tow

Lying on your back behind the victim, grab his tank valve or his BC and kick normally. Your kick will be strong and efficient if you can avoid hitting the victim with your fins. The disadvantage is that you can't simultaneously maintain eye contact with him and see where you're going.



Equipment Tow

This one is good with a panicky victim. While he holds one end of a long piece of equipment, you hold the other. Lie on your back as in the tank tow and pull him. The victim will probably turn onto his stomach to accept this tow, and most BCs will not keep his face clear of the water. He will have to hold his head up, or breathe through his regulator or snorkel.



(continued from p. 43)

and feel secure. A tired diver is often an anxious diver.

Step 2: Towed diver lies on his back, with legs stretched out.

Step 3: Roll onto your side, parallel to and facing the towed diver, as if swimming a sidestroke.

Step 4: Grab his armpit or hook your arm in

Step 5: Use short fin strokes to avoid kicking your buddy.

There are three alternative methods of towing a tired diver, including pulling from behind on his tank valve and pushing against his feet (see "Three Alternative Tows" on pg. 44). Try them all. Different methods work better in different situations.

Skill #7 Practice ditching weights.

It is dismaying how often a drowned diver is found on the bottom with weights still attached. Panicky divers at the surface often forget to dump weights while struggling for buoyancy.

You may think you know how to dump your weights pretty well because you do it after every dive. But fumbling out of a belt in calm safety is a lot different from ditching weights—quickly and cleanly—in the water during an emergency.

Can you locate the buckle or release without looking or thinking? Can you quickly remove the belt or weights without getting them tangled in your gear?

For practice, do this exercise when the dive boat routine calls for removing your weights before climbing up the ladder: Using only one hand and keeping your eyes on the ladder or the swim step, reach for the buckle or the weight release. Now pull your weights well clear of your body before handing them up.

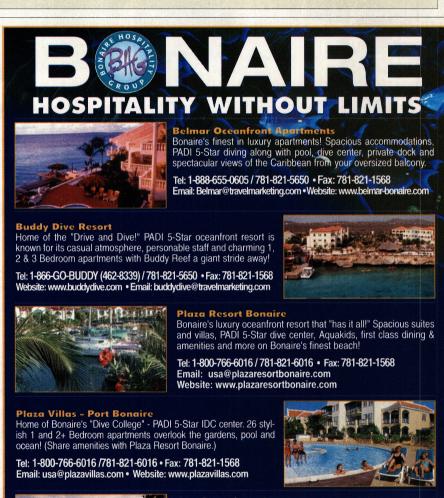
If you wear a traditional threaded weight belt, grab the loose end of the belt to prevent weights from sliding off (see illustration, pg. 40).

HOW TO DITCH WEIGHTS

Step 1: Locate the weight release(s), either the belt buckle or the release handles (usual-

Should You Be Doing This?

There is, of course, some risk in practicing certain safety drills such as air sharing, diver tows and emergency swimming ascents. It's also important to use common sense. When a Cozumel-style current is ripping and the boat is trying to pick up scattered divers, that's no time to be practicing a tired diver tow. When you're anxious and tired and a strong surge is bouncing you up and down at your safety stop, that's no time to practice air sharing. The point is, these drills are optional. Do them when you're relaxed, conditions are good and you feel like it. Don't make a safety drill a hazard itself.





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YOUR BODY

This Is Your Dive On Drugs

Prescription meds may save your health, but can they wreck your dive?

By Selene Yeager

M ost of us wouldn't dream of waking up, smearing some jam on a bagel and firing up a joint before heading out for an 8 a.m. dive. Yet thousands of us pop perfectly legal prescription pills that may cause the same drowsiness and disorientation under water as smoking a J.

In a survey of 700 experienced scuba divers ages 31 to 50 from the U.S. and Australia, researchers found that, though experts recommend avoiding certain drugs prior to diving, divers reported taking a wide variety of pills, some within two hours of a dive. "One quarter of the divers took medication daily," says clinical pharmacist, scuba enthusiast and study author Dr. Simone Taylor. The most commonly taken meds were heart disease (10 percent) and blood pressure pills (9 percent). But there also were a significant number of people taking asthma medication as well as drugs for epilepsy and diabetes, says Taylor.

"The rate of medication use isn't surprising, considering how many people develop diseases that require medical intervention during their diving careers," says emergency medicine researcher and diver Dr. David Taylor. In a different study of 346 divers, he and his coworkers found that 13 percent of the divers required regular medication. More than 10 percent had a history of asthma, and the same number reported having heart disease or high blood pressure. What's more, 47 percent of them were overweight and 11 percent

smoked cigarettes, setting them up for future health problems that could require medication.

"Not only are some of these conditions not safe to dive with, but neither are some of the medications that treat them," says Simone Taylor. "Many medications have side effects that can put a scuba diver at risk. Plus the body processes medications differently in the high-pressure underwater environment. The way some drugs are metabolized could hinder a person's diving fitness or judgment," she says.

Based on Simone Taylor's research, here's the lowdown on the most commonly prescribed medications, plus special meds divers regularly take. (Remember: Any drug can cause side effects. Always consult your doctor if you're on a new medication and planning to dive.)

HYDROCODONE

Brand names: Anexsia, Co-Gesic, Hydrocet, Lorcet, Lortab, Oncet, Panacet, Vicodin

and Zydone.

Taken for: Major league pain.

Potential dive dangers: Pain-killing narcotics such as these routinely make you drowsy, dizzy and just plain dopey.

Recommended precautions: If you have so much pain that you need a narcotic, you shouldn't be diving. For minor aches and pains, stick to over-the-counter pain relievers like Tylenol, Motrin and Advil (not prescription varieties of these drugs, which contain codeine or other narcotics). Also be aware that pain reliever/narcotic combinations are sold over-the-counter in other countries, so read the labels carefully.

ATORVASTATIN

Brand name: Lipitor.

Taken for: Lowering cholesterol.

Potential dive dangers: Cholesterol drugs have few side effects, but any heart disease related to your cholesterol problem could pose a safety risk.

Recommended precautions: Side effects generally occur within the first few weeks of taking a medication. Be sure you are tolerating the drug well before diving.

PREMARIN OR ORTHO-CYCLEN

Taken for: Premarin is a hormone replacement therapy drug used to treat symptoms

of menopause. Ortho-Cyclen is one of many brands of "the Pill" or oral contraceptives.

If your pre-

If your predive regimen looks like this, read on.

TRAINING

Potential dive dangers: Any medication containing estrogen can increase the risk of blood clots in the legs, particularly during long periods of sitting, so there's more risk in the long plane flight to the dive destination than the dive itself.

Recommended precautions: "About a quarter of the women in our survey were on the Pill," says Simone Taylor. "For normal, healthy women, taking hormones should not be a concern." On long flights, get up periodically to move your legs.

ATENOLOL

Brand name: Tenormin. Part of a large family of drugs known as beta blockers.

Taken for: Controlling high blood pressure and angina (chest pain).

Potential dive dangers: Both the condition and the drug may cause trouble for divers. Heart disease is a known risk for scuba diving. "Beta blockers slow your heart rate and reduce your exercise tolerance, which could hinder your ability to carry equipment and swim to the boat while weighted down," she says. "The hyperbaric environment might exacerbate these effects."

Recommended precautions: Consult with your doctor before diving.

LEVOTHYROXINE

Brand names: Synthroid, Levoid, Levothroid, Levoxine and Levoxyl.

Taken for: Treating hypothyroidism (a condition in which the body does not produce enough thyroid hormone).

Potential dive dangers: Synthroid usually produces few side effects, but the drug has profound effects on the body, and should be administered in small doses and closely monitored. "I was really surprised that so many U.S. divers were using this drug," says Simone Taylor. "It can cause increased heart rate, abnormal heart rhythms, tremor and excitability. It may also increase the risk of hyperbaric oxygen tox-

icity. These concerns would mainly be in those people whose dose was too high. If a diver was taking it for hypothyroidism and their disease was well-controlled as verified by thyroid function tests, recreational diving would probably be safe."

Recommended precautions: Consult with your doctor before diving.

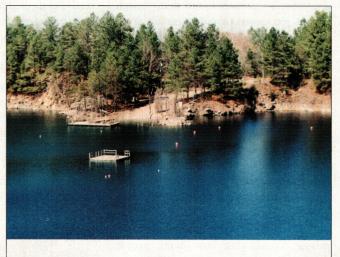
ZITHROMYCIN

Brand names: Zithromax; related to erythromycin and Amoxicillin, Trimox, Amoxil and Wymox.

Taken for: Treating a wide variety of bacterial infections, including skin infections, ear infections, genital and urinary tract infections and respiratory infections.

Potential dive dangers: Few, though the conditions for which you're taking these drugs may cause trouble. Respiratory infections can interfere with breathing. These drugs may also cause nausea or diarrhea, which can lead to dehydration, increasing





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your risk of getting bent. Some antibiotics also can make you sensitive to the sun.

Recommended precautions: Ask your doctor to prescribe an antibiotic with the most manageable side effects. Use a strong sunblock that contains titanium dioxide or zinc oxide.

FUROSEMIDE

Brand name: Lasix. One of a large family of diuretic drugs including HydroDIURIL, Esidrix, Dyazide and Maxide.

Taken for: Treating high blood pressure and other conditions that require the elimination of excess water from the body.

Potential dive dangers: These drugs can cause symptoms like dehydration, dry mouth and irregular heartbeat that don't mix well with scuba diving. What's more, having high blood pressure or other heart conditions can put divers at high risk as well. Recommended precautions: You may be able to dive safely on diuretics provided you

can stay properly hydrated. But you should consult your physician to be safe.

AMLODIPINE BESYLATE

Brand name: Norvasc. One of a family of drugs known as calcium channel blockers. Taken for: Used to control angina (chest pain) and high blood pressure.

Potential dive dangers: Like most high blood pressure medications, calcium channel blockers slow heart rate and may affect exercising heart rate. And, of course, if you have angina, that means you have heart disease, which by itself puts your diving safety in question.

Recommended precautions: How these meds affect your scuba performance depends upon the dose and how your body reacts to them. Consult your doctor before diving.

ALPRAZOLAM

Brand name: Xanax.

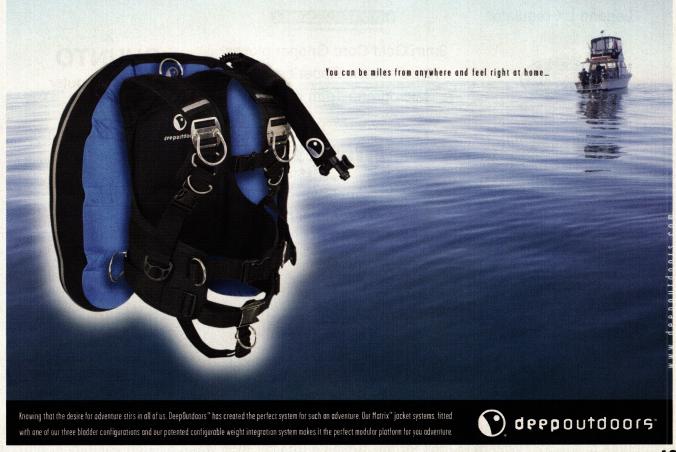
Taken for: Calming anxiety or panic attacks.

Potential dive dangers: Both the anxiety condition and the tranquilizing drugs can pose serious danger to divers. A panic attack under water can be life-threatening, yet in a national survey, more than half of scuba divers, including seasoned vets, reported experiencing panic or near panic behavior on at least one occasion. "If you have anxiety problems serious enough to require medication, diving is unwise," says Simone Taylor. "Likewise, if you're taking a drug to sedate you, it's best to stay on dry land."

Recommended precautions: Xanax is sometimes used to treat a temporary problem, like severe emotional upset following a tragedy. Avoid diving until you are free and clear of your panic and the medication.

ALBUTEROL

Brand names: AccuNeb, Proventil HFA, Ventolin HFA and Volmax Extended Release Tablets.





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We encourage divers everywhere to look for the "Tester's Choice" icon when making equipment purchases.

Ask your local dive shop for "Tester's Choice" products. Let them know you want the best.

Taken for: Controlling asthma and bronchial spasms during exercise.

Potential dive dangers: Though some asthma medications can cause racing heartbeat, the real risk is the condition. People with asthma tend to get air trapped in their lungs, which predisposes them to arterial gas embolism (AGE) when they ascend. "Even swimming to the boat is risky. Most asthma-related accidents happen on the surface because aerosols of salt water can provoke hyperactive airways."

Recommended precautions: The medications themselves are generally safe. But asthma triggered by cold or exercise is prohibitive for diving. People with most other types of asthma should consult their doctors, but can dive as long as their condition is well-controlled.

LORATADINE

Brand name: Claritin.

Taken for: Used as an antihistamine to relieve symptoms of allergies such as sneezing, runny nose, stuffiness, and itchy, teary eyes.

Potential dive dangers: Drowsiness. You might not be quite as alert or coordinated as you should be for a challenging dive.

Recommended precautions: Read the labels on prescription or over-the-counter antihist-amines (like Benadryl), and avoid types that make you drowsy on days you'll be diving. The same goes for decongestants such as Sudafed, which many divers take to shrink inflamed sinus passages. "These drugs make some people agitated, so be sure you've tried and tolerated whatever drug you take before diving with it," says Simone Taylor.

OMEPRAZOLE

Brand name: Prilosec; related drugs include Prevacid (lansoprazole) and over-the-counter meds like Zantac, Tagamet and Pepcid.

Taken for: Decreasing stomach acid for the treatment of heartburn (gastroesophageal reflux) and stomach ulcers.

Potential dive dangers: Some of these drugs can cause diarrhea, which can contribute to dehydration. And a few, such as Zantac, may cause drowsiness.

Recommended precautions: Stay well-hydrated if diarrhea is a problem. Avoid brands that make you sleepy. Otherwise, these drugs are perfectly safe for scuba.

SERTRAL INF

Brand name: Zoloft; related drugs include Paxil (paroxetine hydrochloride) and Prozac (fluoxetine).

Taken for: Relieving depression.

Potential dive dangers: Antidepressants act on your central nervous system, which could predispose you to nitrogen narcosis, says Simone Taylor. These drugs also can make you sleepy or agitated, which can affect your ability to dive safely. Some conditions, like panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder and severe mood disorders may pose too high a risk to dive safely.

Recommended precautions: Consult your doctor first. Even if you're considered safe for scuba, avoid diving the first few weeks on an antidepressant, when effects on mental alertness are strongest.

CELECOXIB

Brand name: Celebrex; related drugs include Vioxx (rofecoxib).

Taken for: An anti-inflammatory drug used for relieving arthritis and menstrual pain.

Potential dive dangers: Like any drug, these medications can

have side effects like abdominal distress that would make it difficult to dive, but otherwise the meds themselves should be safe for scuba.

Recommended precautions: "When you start these drugs, they can leave you feeling a little fuzzy-headed. Take them for a few weeks and be sure you're tolerating them before you dive," suggests Simone Taylor.

SILDENAFIL CITRATE

Brand name: Viagra.

Taken for: Treating erectile dysfunction. Potential dive dangers: The little blue pill can cause headaches and sensitivity to light. But the effects are very short-lived. Recommended precautions: "I wouldn't

Recommended precautions: "I wouldn't take Viagra right before a dive. But I can't imagine why anyone would," she says.

MECLIZINE HYDROCHLORIDE

Brand names: Antivert, Bonine; related drugs include Dramamine (dimenhydrinate). **Taken for:** Preventing seasickness.

Potential dive dangers: "They're related to antihistamines, so they also can make you drowsy or cloud your thinking," says Simone Taylor. They also cause dry mouth, which can make breathing through a regulator difficult.

Recommended precautions: Most divers can take seasickness meds safely. Experiment to identify which formulation has the least impact on your mental clarity. Be extra careful to stay well-hydrated, and try hard candy to relieve dry mouth.

MICRONASE

Brand names: DiaBeta and Glynase. One of a large family of drugs used to regulate blood sugar.

Taken for: Treating Type II diabetes.

Potential dive dangers: All diabetes medications, including insulin, can cause hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar. "If you have a hypoglycemic episode under water and pass out, that is really dangerous for you and the entire dive crew," says Simone Taylor. "Diving with diabetes itself is very controversial."

Recommended precautions: If your diabetes is not well-regulated, you should probably not be diving. Otherwise, consult with your doctor. If you get a thumb's up, check your blood sugar right before you dive to be sure it's a little on the high side, so you don't have an episode under water.

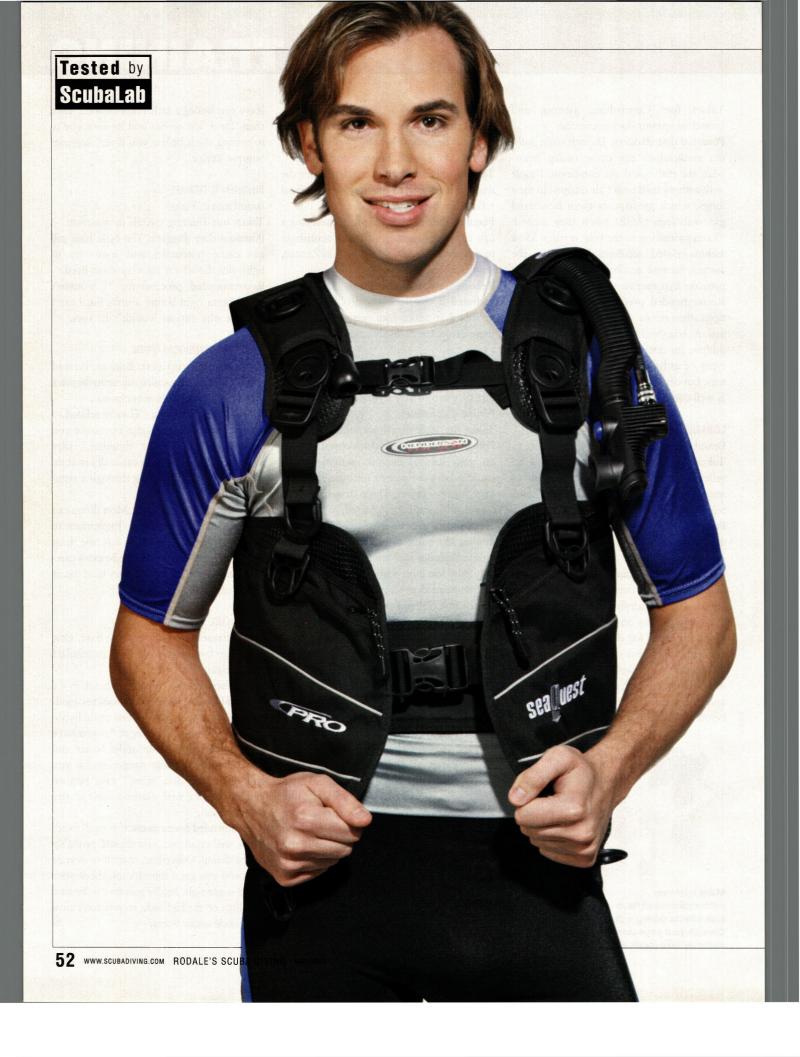


Many common

prescriptions can have

side effects during a dive.

Consult your physician if you routinely take medication.



ScubaLab tested 13 jacket-style BCs and found that sometimes less really is more.

By John Brumm

he world is a complicated place. And so is the world of scuba. Today's diving is computerized, the equipment integrated, systemized and digitized. For

the most part, this is a good thing, making for both smarter and safer divers. However, there's also something to be said for keeping it simple.

Take BCs, for example. There's still a huge demand among divers for traditional,

non-weight-integrated,
jacket-style BCs. With
these BCs, no assembly is required, and
you don't have complicated weight systems to contend
with. What you do
get is solid in-water
performance, lots of
buoyancy control, loads of

usable pocket space, deep sleeves for stashing safe seconds and consoles (if you're not into retractors)—and all of this at a bargain price.

ScubaLab rounded up 13 traditional BCs from 11 manufacturers. We reviewed their owner's manuals, tested their valves and scrutinized everything from D-rings to pockets to padding. Then we took them into the water and evaluated their comfort and stability, their ability to easily maintain a proper swimming attitude and to maintain a controlled ascent using the BCs' valve systems.

Tests show that, as a category, traditional BCs tend to perform better than other types of BCs, thanks primarily to their simplicity. Unencumbered by integrated weight systems that can affect stability, eat up pocket space and make for a heavier system, traditional BCs are free to provide buoyancy control without any downside. In fact, we didn't find a bad BC in the bunch—any of the 13 models tested would serve you well. But after repeated dives, testers came up with four clear favorites.



DACOR RAV

PRICE: \$250. COMMENTS: The sporty new economy Rav from Dacor combines penthouse performance with a bargain-basement price, earning the BC a Best Buy designation. Providing lots of strap adjustment, the Rav also offers a unique "over-molded" backpack design that is deceptively comfortable and contributes to above-average stability at depth. An abrasion-resistant Duroskin exterior protects the BC from diving's hard knocks. The smallish power inflator provides efficient buoyancy control, backed up by two very efficient remote exhaust valves. Cranking on the air produces no body squeeze, even on the surface. The Rav is super simple to strap to a tank. There's only one pocket, but it's got a lot of volume and is easy to access.

MARES VECTOR ORIGIN

PRICE: \$299. COMMENTS: Simplicity is the secret to the Mares Vector Origin's success. This lightweight BC offers few frills, but what it does offer performs exceptionally well, like two remote exhaust valves and an excellent power inflator. One of the best of the bunch, the Vector Origin's inflator makes ascent control and fine-tuning buoyancy a breeze. The BC has minimal padding but no body squeeze, because the bladder inflates away from the body.

Comfortable and stable at depth, the Vector Origin has a large overstrap and two big pockets, although the small opening on one makes it hard to insert a hand. Roomy sleeves behind the pockets provide places to stash a safe second or a console.



SCUBAPRO GLIDE 500

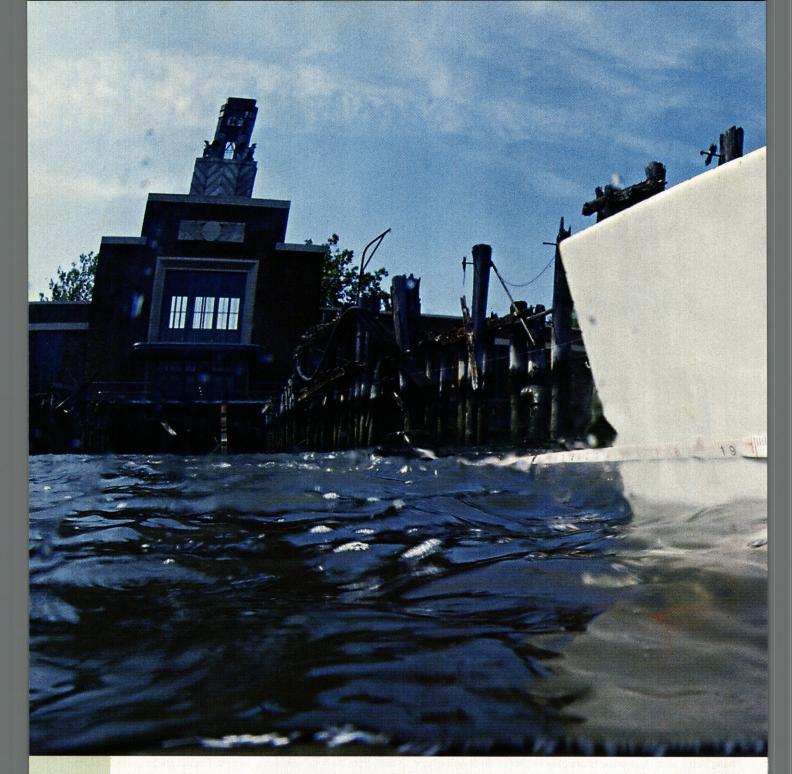
PRICE: \$331. COMMENTS: The little touches are what stand out on the Glide 500. Although this is Scubapro's most basic BC, it has a comfortable felt lining throughout, nice wide shoulders with lots of adjustment and curved lumbar support. Sternum strap ends are threaded so they don't hang in the way. Huge pockets are easy to access. Both well-placed remote exhausts are fitted with distinctive pull knobs. There's even a handy molded carry handle.

Under water, the Glide 500 lives up to its name. It's extremely stable, making it effortless to maintain the proper swimming attitude. A streamlined power inflator provides very good ascent control, but it's a bit difficult to grasp, especially when wearing gloves.

SEAQUEST PRO

PRICE: \$400. **COMMENTS:** The best-fitting BC of them all, SeaQuest's Pro offers good padding in the back and lumbar regions as well as on the shoulders. It comes with excellent swivel buckles to optimize shoulder strap routing, a particularly nice feature for dry suit divers. The BC inflates away from the body, eliminating squeeze. Pockets are good-sized, but the zippers can be hard to find.

There's a contour backpack on the larger sizes to help stabilize the tank, although the test BC's standard backpack provided excellent stability. Ascent control is very good, and the shape of the power inflator makes it comfortable in the hand, although the valve system produced only fair overall air flow performance. The two remote exhausts dump air efficiently.





No wreck is too challenging, no water too murky, no dive too tough for Uncle Sam's elite band of diving rangers. BY BUCKY MCMAHON

t's a pretty weird dive site, Ellis Island National Monument, but I have to admit the topside scenery is spectacular. Hard by rises the verdigris-colored colossus of the Statue of Liberty. Beyond, in stunning chiaroscuro, juts the august complexity of the Manhattan skyline. And here comes another Circle Line ferry, packed with tourists, churning into the ferry channel. Blatting a Bronx cheer, the ferry docks along the seawall, while its wake rocks the floating dock where we're suiting up in body-condoms for a plunge into the confused and probably toxic water.

Ah, New Yawk City-what a place to dive!

So maybe Ellis Island will never fly the "diver down" flag of recreational diving. Nonetheless, it's the resting place of a significant shipwreck, that of its own eponymous ferry, the Ellis Island, a workhorse of America's great immigrant experience. While Ellis Island (the buildings and grounds) undergoes a huge restoration—at \$156 million so far, the costliest in U.S. history—the ferry Ellis Island lies in shallow water, showing a conspicuously disintegrating gunnel at low tide. Enter the National Park Service's elite underwater trouble-shooters, the Submerged Resources Center. Their mission: map the wreck and recommend what to do about it. It's a complex, dirty job—but nothing unusual for the SRC team.

"It's just like in a 'Doc Savage' novel," says Dave Conlin, the perpetually upbeat, 37-year-old SRC archeologist in charge of the ferry project. "There's Ox, the iron-muscled Norwegian, expert in demolitions ..."

"Actually, I'm the Sgt. Bilko of the outfit," photographer/videographer Brett Seymour jokes back. "I find ingenious ways to requisition all the latest cool gear."

Conlin's tongue is firmly in cheek, but like the fictional hero Savage and his band of improbably adept warriors, the SRC divers combine brain, brawn and technology to an impressive degree. He is "Doc" Conlin, after all, a Ph.D. in maritime archeology. His SRC partners here on Ellis Island, fellow maritime archeologist Matt Russell and Seymour, are also highly accomplished divers and experts at their specialties.

The civil service classification for what Conlin and Russell do is park ranger/archeologist. Seymour's classification is audiovisual production specialist. But their jobs could be described as professional adventurer. In addition to surveying and interpreting the archeological treasures of more than four million acres of submerged park service land, the team is often called on to dive Uncle Sam's historic shipwrecks wherever they've landed under water.

Dressed in their green polyester ranger uniforms, the SRC divers travel the world—from Maine to Key Biscayne; from the California Channel Islands to the English Channel; from the Bering Strait to Micronesia—wherever and whenever they're needed.

Most have advanced degrees in archeology and anthropology, but team members must be highly skilled divers first and foremost. The SRC team responds to any situation under water, whether it's deep decompression diving with double tanks and Geiger counters to test for radioactivity at Bikini Atoll, or dry suit diving on wrecks under the ice of the Great Lakes, or searching the dark depths of a desert reservoir for a drowning victim.

Only the pace is constant: In an average year, SRC divers spend six months on the road together—as much as a hard-touring rock and roll band. And like rockers, they have great jobs and



they know it

"It's not a job, it's a commitment. It's a passion," says founder Daniel Lenihan, now semi-retired but still active with the unit. "If you don't have a little bit of outrageousness in you, you aren't going to make it in this team. We only know how to work full throttle. I suppose we could be reasonable about it, but then that wouldn't be the team."

As Russell changes out of his ranger duds and into the quilted long johns he'll wear under his dry suit, he tells me about some beautiful dives he did recently in Glacier National Park, on ferry wrecks from the turn of the last century. Besides the amazing diving, the thing Russell loves most about the job is the challenge of doing something difficult and doing it well.

And about this New York ferry we're about to dive? "This one's challenging," Russell tells me, grinning.

Center traces its roots back to a couple of colorful, well-matched dive buddies, Daniel Lenihan and Larry Murphy, both of whom had been "campus radicals of one sort or another in the 1960s,"

as Lenihan writes in his history of the group, Submerged. Lenihan, a native New Yorker, studied archeology at Florida State in Tallahassee, where nearby sinkholes and caves promised Indian artifacts and the bones of wooly mammoths. By the early '70s, Lenihan was diving with cave pioneers Sheck Exley and Tom Mount inside some of the hairiest limestone mazes in the world.

Murphy was a trained commercial diver and passionate underwater preservationist, who took cave training from Lenihan for his job with the state archeologist's office and became a convert to the cave cult.

They teamed up for the National Park Service in 1976 on a four-year underwater archeological survey of flooded reservoirs in the southwest, a project headed by Lenihan. The National Reservoir Inundation Study called for repetitive high-altitude diving in frigid, low-vis water. Lenihan, Murphy and the team they trained used cave diving techniques, cave diving discipline and even the same #18 braided-nylon line (standard issue in Florida caves) to guide them in the chilling murk.

The success of NRIS won Lenihan the job of directing a permanent team of diving rangers, the Submerged Cultural Resources Unit (with the beloved acronym S.C.R.U.), now the Submerged Resources Center. The SRC has since archeologized on such storied wrecks as the giant aircraft carrier Saratoga, sunk during Abomb tests off Bikini Atoll. Their mission to map, illustrate and test the wreck-strewn site for radioactivity opened up one of the world's greatest playgrounds for advanced recreational divers.

An ongoing project of equal scope—but greater pathos—has been the SRC's study of the battleship Arizona in Pearl Harbor. The tomb of more than 1,000 young servicemen, the wreck also holds a large quantity of toxic Bunker C fuel oil that continues to weep a few drops at a time into the harbor water. Using tried-andtrue tools—lines, tapes and brow-crinkling trigonometry—the

SRC mapped the exterior (the largest underwater structure ever mapped in such exacting detail). Ongoing surveys of the interior employ state-of-the-art remotely operated vehicles (ROVs).

The SRC team also surveyed the wreck of the Civil War submarine H.L. Hunley, paving the way for one of the most complex and expensive recovery operations in the history of underwater archeology-raising and conserving the vessel intact.

In between headline-grabbing expeditions, SRC divers have also led risky body recovery missions (Lenihan and Murphy's dives inside the works of a Texas dam, described in Submerged, are about as scary as it gets); pioneered vehicular rescue techniques (when good boat launches go bad); certified scores of fellow NPS rangers (the SRC team are all diving instructors); been featured in documentaries by the BBC, National Geographic and The Discovery Channel, among others; and won academic prizes for their archeology along the way.

ESPRIT DE CORPS Though the core SRC team remains tiny—just the four archeologists Lenihan, Murphy, Conlin and Russell, plus Seymour, the man behind the lens, and an office manager, Fran Day-it can flex its muscles with volunteers and temps, drawing on the services of an ever more amphibious Park Service some 3,500 rangers strong.

The team I met one steamy morning in mid-July included five men in green: the three SRC guys, plus two veteran rangers on loan-Art Ireland, a nondiving surveying expert, and Jim Bradford, an artful underwater mapmaker. Rounding out the crew were interns Jackie Piero and general gofer Brendan Lenihan (Dan Lenihan's son), who was stoked to answer to "Copy Boy" so long as his duties also included diving.

They'd been hammering on the ferry project since April, and Conlin and Ireland were surveying the old broken pier that fans out from the ferry house. The wreck itself had been conceptually divided into 83 equal-sized panels. Jackie Piero and Jim Bradford were blowing bubbles in murk, plugging away with mapmaker's tape and slate at a panel in the high 70s. Brett Seymour and Brendan Lenihan dived in to recover artifacts. Matt Russell drew the short straw: media tour guide.

MMING TO ELLIS ISLAND "Ready?" Russell asks. I flash the OK signal and we slip into the waters of the Golden Portal like a couple of wharf rats.

> The near opacity of the ferry channel is immediately disorienting. We swim through untold shades of brown, bright caramel brown near the surface, with shining bits of particulate matter wildly swirling, a darker brown down deeper. Russell's flippers flee ahead of me in the gloom and I follow them like a remora. At 12 feet we kneel on the sucking mud of the bottom, which is very brown indeed.

Our full facemasks, equipped with twoway radios, allow us to converse.

RUSSELL: Well, this is it.

ME: Where?

RUSSELL: Right here, in front of us.

I move my face forward cautiously and-clunk!-there it is. A tiny patch of



rusty hull is suddenly visible: craters of corrosion, a nut on a bolt. Move back a couple of inches and it's gone again. From the little I can see, I can't help thinking what a shame that it's come to this. The Ellis Island, a 140-foot, double-bowed passenger ferry, carried some 15 million striving souls from this ferry depot to the freedom, opportunity and laissez-faire mayhem of Lower Manhattan.

In 1954, the U.S. government abandoned Ellis Island-lock, stock and barrel-vaulted Registry Room. Just turned a key and walked. The Ellis Island rode out a decade of winter storms before listing terminally and hunkering down into the muck in 1968. A tropical storm in 1982 demolished the wooden superstructure, sweeping away much obvious historical charm. A mere shell now, it's all but lost to time.

Russell is currently mapping the boiler—panel #77—which from what I can see of it looks like the business end of a cement mixer that's been stomped by Godzilla. It's shallow and surgy here, the boiler a jumble of rusty, sharp edges fading in and out of sight. The last couple of days Russell has spent long hours hover-



ing above it with tape and slate, limning its every beat-up inch.

Unlike the three blind men in the famous Hindu parable of the elephant, these SRC guys are used to working by touch—and getting solid results. Dave Conlin tells a story about the Hunley mission. He and Matt Russell had to improvise a way to measure the diameter and shape of the hull, which lay five feet below bottom in a newly dredged hole in Charleston Harbor. The vis was zippo. He and Russell came up with a device—"a definite Rube Goldberg, Frankenstein's monster, PVC pipe kinda kludged together sort of deal, a real SRC special." Working blind and upside down with the contraption and a folding plastic ruler, Russell and Conlin came up with a hull height of four feet, three inches. That seemed awfully small; plus, the

historical record stated that the sub was five feet high.

Four years later, Russell, Conlin and Seymour were back in Charleston when the Hunley was raised. "The sub broke the surface and was placed, unharmed, on a barge," recalls Conlin. "My overwhelming reaction was-'Damn, that thing is tiny."



KIRKBRIDE

Four feet, three inches tall, to be exact."

Yessiree, the SRC team is gonna know if it's an elephant all right, and there'll be a written report, an electronic data base, and a portfolio of photo and video images to back up the claim. What's even more impressive, though, is that they're going to recommend what to do about the brute.

A fund of OMNISCIENCE "Dynamite it, right?" I say to Conlin. It's a couple of hours after my dive and I've had time to process all the data I need on the *Ellis Island*. "Cut it up with blow torches and haul it to deeper water."

Conlin chuckles indulgently. "Come on. I'll show you a little of what we've got."

I follow him into one of the wings of the restored Main Building to an upstairs room the SRC is using as its on-site office. Conlin sits at a laptop and starts clicking on icons.

There's Ellis Island, as seen from above, its man-made logic revealed—two islets, like the lobes of a brain, with the ferry channel neatly bisecting the two halves.

Click!

There's the ferry channel enlarged, with magnetometer readings overlaid, the lozenge-shaped ferry glowing in bright magenta.

There's an underwater view of the wreck, as pictured by sidescan sonar, peaks and valleys like an EEG.

Click!

There's the broken pier—a work in progress—rendered as a precision line drawing. An exact and complex portrait of pick-up sticks.

Conlin puts the program through a few more paces, rotating, enlarging, shrinking, showing various combinations of overlays. It's not quite omniscience, but a form thereof, and certainly a great deal more than I'd have guessed could be known about a blackwater wreck.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK It's late in the afternoon and every-body's out of the water. They're all about to pack up the gear and head for the office to download and debrief when a teacher approaches with about a dozen kids from a school for the deaf. The kids volunteered to do various jobs around the park, and Dave Conlin offered to give them a little demonstration of the project. The teacher translates with sign language as Conlin speaks.

"You'd all be good at this because we use a lot of signs under water," Conlin says. "Can you guess what this means?" He signs a few familiar ones. OK. Stop. Up. Then slashes his hand across his throat. There's a lot of laughter. Kids are signing like crazy. They



SRC divers Dave Conlin (left) and Matt Russell (center) mark their progress with map expert Jim Bradford (right).

know that one too.

Brett brings out his Nikon and lets them look through the lens. Matt writes on his erasable slate, shows them a few others crowded with data. One of the kids volunteers to try on a dry suit. Another, hooting with pleasure, dons a full facemask.

In a week or so, Brett will be joining up with Daniel Lenihan and some other rangers to dive the cold currents of the Pacific Northwest—an exploration trip. A little later, Matt's off to Hawaii and the challenge of the *Arizona*, still oozing bunker C fuel into Pearl Harbor. In the fall, Dave and the rest of the SRC crew is headed to the North Sea off the Yorkshire coast to look for the wreck of John Paul Jones's *Bon Homme Richard*.

Whatever their future adventures, I know I'm seeing the SRC at its multitasking best—doing preservation, facilitation, education, and just plain making friends with a curious public hungry for knowledge.

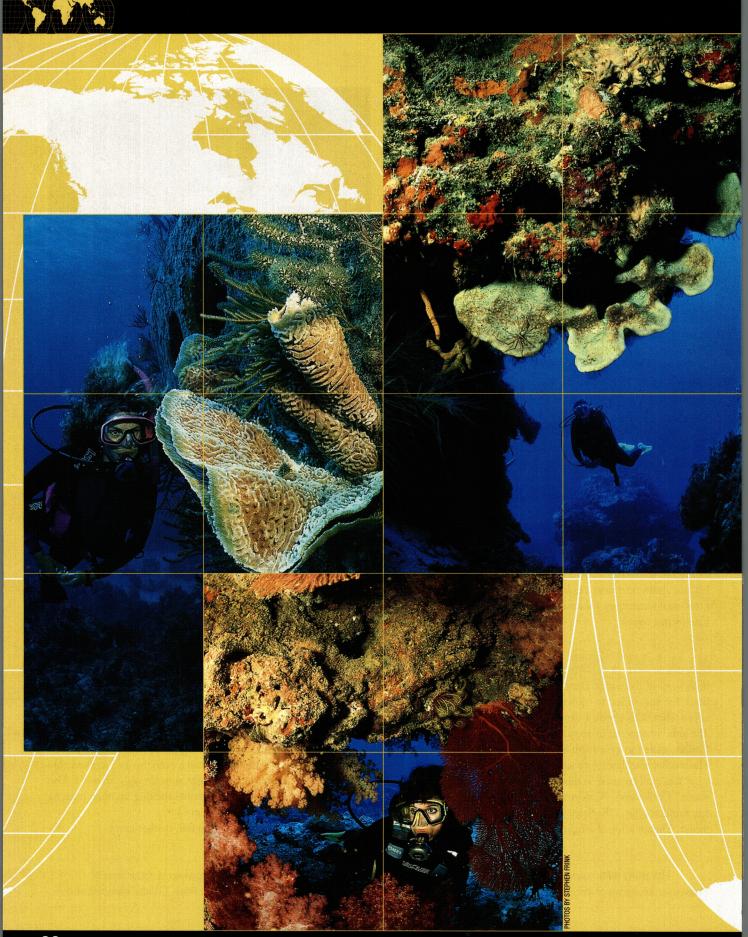
"Each project has its rewards," Conlin told me earlier, "and each one produces surprises. The things you think will be dramatic often turn out mundane, and the things you think will be boring can bring an unexpected charge of excitement."

I ask him if this is one of those latter cases and he says, "Yeah, this is a highlight. I'm going to remember this."

Then Jim Bradford unrolls the big paper map of the ferry—the work in progress. And it's a beauty, every broken strake lightly sketched, the progress of disintegration lovingly arrested. The kids look at the water, the bit of gunnel sticking up, then back to the map—amazed. They can't believe it.

Having seen and touched it myself, neither can I.

•



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ARUBA Aruba offers a little bit of everything to the Caribbean vacationer: casinos, offshore fishing, restaurants, shopping, watersports and world-class windsurfing. Multiple daily flights by major U.S. carriers make for easy, convenient travel. Aruba is an excellent destination for diver/nondiver couples because there is so much to do topside while one partner is busy diving. Located 20 miles north of Venezuela, Aruba features premier wreck diving at shallow depths with short rides

BEST DIVES Aruba's newest dive, the wreck of the freighter *Star Gerren* sits on her port side in 40 feet of water and is already colonized by coral. A deeper freighter sitting upright at 90 feet, the *Jane Sea* is loaded with fish life and its gutted cavity makes for a long, easy swim. No trip to Aruba is complete, however, without a dive on the 400-foot German freighter *Antilla*. One of the Caribbean's largest wreck dives, the *Antilla* was scuttled by her crew when Germany tore into Holland in World War II.

from the beach.

In addition to the many wrecks, shallow sloping reefs along

The 400-foot
German freighter
Antilla is one of
the largest wreck
dives in the
Caribbean.

the southern shore are popular hangouts for barracudas, morays and schooling fish. Be on the lookout for the 10th annual Reef Care Project, July 5 to 6.

WEATHER Temps rarely drop below 75F in winter or rise above 85F in summer. Sunny and dry, trade winds keep it cool and comfortable.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Low 80Fs in summer to upper 70Fs in winter

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Vis is typically in the 50- to 100-foot range. **TRAVEL SAVVY** A passport or birth certificate with a valid photo ID are required for U.S. and Canadian citizens.

DESTINATION LINKS The Aruba Tourism Authority at www.aruba.com; Aruba Online at www.arubatourism.com or www.arubaexperience.com.

READER COMMENTS

N.C., MIAMI, FLA.: "Beautiful island, great underwater activities and great outof-water activities, too." B.Y., Vestal, N.Y.: "I saw a good variety of wrecks,
especially the Antilla. I saw large green morays on every dive ... Aruba has
good dining, shopping and casinos." M.A., Palmetto, Fla.: "Good shore and
wreck dives for beginners." A.B., Schaumburg, Ill.: "There were numerous
sites to dive. Everyone gets a chance to see what they like—wrecks, reefs,
walls and drift dives."

Aruba Pro Dive (011) 297-582-5520 web: www.arubaprodive.com Small groups, no more than seven divers at a time.

Mermaid Sport Divers (011) 297-583-5546 web: www.scubadivers-aruba.com

We are a small, family-owned company that does not use cattleboats. Personalized service. package: Unlimited diving package for one week (7 days, up to 20 dives), \$399 p.p., including all diving equipment; \$299 p.p., including tanks and weights.

Native Divers Aruba (011) 297-586-4763 web: www.nativedivers.com ■ Small groups of five divers; customers make schedule.

Pelican Adventures (011) 297-587-2302 web: www.pelican-aruba.com ■ PADI 5-star Gold Palm Center. More than 16 years experience on Aruba, service and professionalism, the island's largest fleet. We have our own marina with facilities located on the premises of major resorts on Aruba. package: Threetank, same-day diving with lunch included, \$90 without equipment, \$110 with equipment. 1- to 2-day certification courses for beginners include pool sessions, open-water training, equipment, transportation, textbook and certi-

fication, \$225 p.p.

Red Sail Sports Aruba (877) 271-8458, (011) 297-586-1603 web: www.red sail.com A complete diving and watersports center. We visit more than 20 moored sites. package: "Dive, Dive and More Dives"-5 tanks for only \$150. Use your tanks in any combination that you choose. Designed to fit your schedule. Package valid through Dec. 19, 2003. S.E.Aruba Fly 'n Dive (011) 297-587-8759 web: www.searuba.com ■ We take small groups to a variety of dive sites. package: Hotel accommodations for 7 nights and 7 days of diving, including tanks and weights, starting from \$575 p.p. E-mail us for more information. Unique Sports of Aruba (011) 297-586-0096 web: www.visitaruba.com/uniques ports We have a diver record sheet onboard for every dive. It lets divers know their maximum depth, time and remaining psi. This also verifies all divers are back on board and lets them fill out their log books after the dives. We also put more crew on our boats to help split the groups nackage: 10 dives for \$260 p.p. includes any mix and match of dives. No extra cost for night dives. Package valid for duration of stay on the island.

AUSTRALIA No matter how you cut it, the land Down Under was made for going down. Even outside of Queensland and its world-renowned Great Barrier Reef, Australia boasts sublime diving, with great white sharks in the south and whale sharks in the west. Each morning in Cairns, Cape Tribulation, Port Douglas and other Queensland coastal towns, dive boats set sail for the Great Barrier Reef. Two-tank trips depart in the morning and get you back for dinner. Threeand four-day trips are also an option, allowing you extra time on more remote reefs without having to ride back and forth to the coast. Full-fledged live-aboards can keep you on the reef for a week to 10 days, plus get you to the Coral Sea, where thick schools of pelagic fish congregate and the visibility is a stunning 200 feet.

BEST DIVES The SS Yongala is Australia's most famous wreck, having had more than eight decades of bottom time to collect marine life including soft corals and the occasional bull and tiger shark. Watanabe Pinnacle in the Coral Sea is an enormous openocean pinnacle that's orbited by trevally (jacks), chevron barracuda, tuna and unicornfish.

WEATHER Below the equator, seasons are reversed—December through February is summer; June through August is winter. In

Here's a fish you won't find in the Caribbeanthe harlequin tuskfish, a native of Australia's **Great Barrier Reef.**

the tropical north of Queensland, daytime air temps vary from the 80Fs in winter to the 90Fs with high humidity in summer. Southern Australia experiences 70Fs in winter and 80Fs in sum-

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Expect water temps in the mid-80Fs in summer throughout the central and northern Great Barrier Reef, but surprisingly cool mid-70Fs in winter. If you're diving from a live-aboard, bring a good wetsuit as you'll get chilled from frequent dives.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Water clarity inside the Great Barrier Reef is affected by tides and surge, and averages 40 to 60 feet, with an occasional high of 100 feet. Outside the reef, visibility averages a reliable 50 to 100 feet and often soars to more than 200 feet out in the Coral Sea.

TRAVEL SAVVY Get ready for a butt-numbing airplane ride—14 hours from L.A. to Sydney-so dress and pack accordingly. If you've got a night to spare, plan to spend it in Sydney upon arrival. After the long flight, the last thing you want to do is wait several hours for a connecting flight that will take several more hours before depositing you near a bed or shower.

DESTINATION LINKS The Australia Tourist Commission at www.australia.com; the Tourism Queensland web site at www.DestinationQueensland.com.

READER COMMENTS

P.H., CULLMAN, ALA.: "Unbelievable color on the corals ... Thousands of reef fish, rays, whitetips and silvertips, minke whales, turtles, sea snakes, potato cod, dolphin, barracuda, morays, and much, much more." B.M., San Diego, Calif.: "The weather was perfect and the seas were calm. The amount and variety of sea life was superb." J.A., TORONTO, ONTARIO: "I saw an incredible concentration of big animals-gray nurse sharks, wobbegongs, huge bull rays, leatherback turtles." R.F., Houston, Texas: "I had stunning dives. Warm water, with a good mix of pinnacles, walls, drifts, etc. ... Great vacation."

BYRON BAY

Planula Divers Retreat (011) 61-2-66809134 web: www.planula.com.au/dive/ dive.html Planula is the only diver's retreat in Byron Bay, one of Australia's top 10 dive sites. At the easternmost point of Australia, tropical and temperate currents mix to form a unique habitat for an enormous variety and abundance of marine life. package: For current dive packages, check web site.

CAIRNS

Deep Sea Divers Den (011) 61-7-40467333 web: www.divers-den.com Winner of the 2001 North Queensland Tourism Award for Adventure Tourism. package: PADI learn to dive course begins daily. Choose from

4-, 5- or 6-day courses; from AU\$300 p.p.

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BAHAMAS

NEW PROVIDENCE AND GRAND BAHAMA If you're a diver seeking pulse-racing adventure for your next dive vacation, you could schlep halfway around the world-or you could hop over to New Providence and Grand Bahama, only 50 miles off the coast of Florida. These two islands have made their reputation on adventure diving-from wall dives to wreck dives, shark encounters to underwater scooter adventures, blue holes to bottlenose dolphins. And the best part—if you packed right now, you could be there tomorrow, enjoying it all for prices that most divers consider a value.

As an added bonus, there are as many options topside as there are under water—from golf to gambling, shopping, playing tennis and sailing.

BEST DIVES Serious divers, however, leave the golf clubs at home and focus on the dive attractions. Your only task is to choose your adventure:

Walls. Off the southwest corner of New Providence, the reef takes a dizzying vertical plunge, 6,000 feet into the ocean.

Wrecks. For many divers, the only thing better than a wreck is many wrecks. These islands have them in spades.

Shark dives. A heart-pounding experience, whether you choose an encounter where divemasters feed Caribbean and blacktip reef sharks, or you suit up in chain mail and try it yourself.

Dolphin dives. Off Grand Bahama, you can dive a reef with specially trained bottlenose dolphins or you can take a liveaboard to Little Bahama Bank and locate wild spotted dolphins.

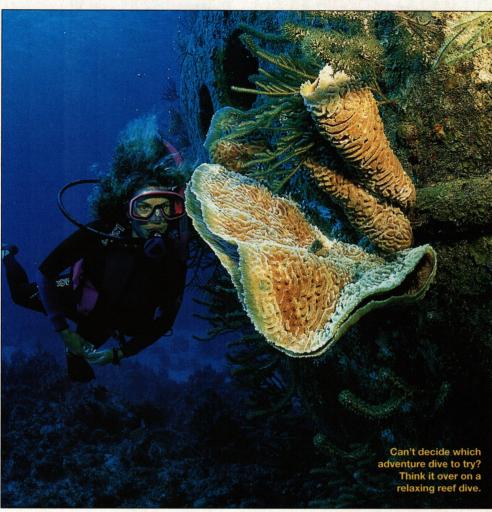
Blue holes and caverns. You'll find plenty of excitement in the flooded vertical caves found inland and on the ocean floor.

Reefs. Clear, warm water and shallow coral gardens with lots of tropicals are as good for snorkelers as they are for divers, from beginners to advanced.

WEATHER From December to May, temperatures average 60F to 75F, while summer temps average 80F to 85F.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Winter water temps drop to the 70Fs, while summer temps peak in the high 80Fs.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY 80 to 100 feet.



TRAVEL SAVVY You need proof of citizenship, but a valid driver's license and birth certificate will suffice.

DESTINATION LINKS Bahamas Ministry of Tourism at www.bahamas.com; the Bahamas Diving Association at www.bahamasdiving.com.

READER COMMENTS

GRAND BAHAMA R.F., PHOEMIX, ARIZ.: "The big animal encounters are electric. The convenience to Miami/Ft. Lauderdale is great, too." M.J., SANTA CRUZ, CALIF.: "The wreck diving was fun, and easy enough for open-water divers ... The visibility is excellent ... The fish are brilliant in color, and make good photo subjects." R.S., HENDERSON, NEV.: "There's very good wreck diving and lots of little stuff. Some places had sharks and large turtles." C.R., BILLINGS, OKLA.: "The dolphin dive was incredible. You can tell that these animals are well-loved and spoiled. They are taken to open ocean every day, yet they always return home to their sanctuary."

NEW PROVIDENCE B.B., LEBANON, N.H.: "The weather was perfect with lots of sun and moderate humidity. The dive sites were teeming with life, both small and large. I saw sharks, rays, turtles, eels and all sorts of wrecks." J.F., LINDENHURST, N.Y.: "Close to the USA, this is a beautiful country with clear water,







friendly people and plenty of topside activity." J.H., NEW MILFORD, CONN.: "Clear water and more sharks than most people ever want to see." M.B., FT. LAUDERDALE, FLA.: "Lots of diversity—walls, reefs, wreck, movie sites and shark dives." W.G., VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.: "I liked the warm, clear water." B.H., PALM HARBOR, FLA.: "I liked diving with the reef sharks."

GRAND BAHAMA

Grand Bahama Scuba (242) 373-6775 web: www.grandbahamascuba.com ■ We offer personal service, attention to detail, extremely knowledgeable dive guides and instructors. package: 10-dive package, \$275.

UNEXSO (800) 992-DIVE (3483), (561) 472-1100 web: www.unexso.com

NEW PROVIDENCE

Bahama Divers (800) 398-3483, (242) 393-5644 web:

Dive Dive Dive Ltd. Resort (800) 368-3483, (242) 362-1401 web: www.divedivedive.com ■ We are a full-service dive resort with a small and intimate dive operation. The dive boat docks at the door of your villa. Our staff is like an extended family and make our guests feel like they are part of it. You are not a number with us. You are our guests.

Diver's Haven (800) 684-DIVE, (242) 363-3333 web: www.divershaven.com

Nassau Scuba Centre (800) 327-8150, (954) 462-3400 web: www.nealwatson.com ■ We are a 5-star PADI training center with a full-service photo department. package: 7 nights at the Sunspree Resort on Paradise Island, 6 days of diving, all taxes, meals, drinks and snacks included, \$1,557 p.p., dbl. occ.

Stuart Cove's Dive Bahamas (800) 646-3333, (954) 524-5755 web: www.stuartcove.com/rsd Our facility is actually a movie set from the film "Flipper" and reflects an old fishing village. But underneath is the largest and most modern dive center in the Bahamas. We pioneered shark wrangling and recreational shark dives and are the only resort in the world where you can go "wall flying" on an underwater scooter. We also have Nassau's only full-service underwater photo and video center with five fulltime photo pros. Hollywood producers have known about our clear waters and consistent conditions for years. Our walls and reefs are world-class. In addition, our active artificial reef program now boasts 15 sites with wrecks. Whether you are just learning to dive or are a world traveler. Stuart Cove's has something for you. With nonstop flights from seven cities in the U.S., weekend trips are a breeze. Cruise ships call on Nassau, creating a perfect day trip for you. If you are staying at any location on the island, we'll pick you up and take you back at no charge. package: 3 nights in a garden-view room at the South Ocean Golf & Beach Resort and 2 days of diving at Stuart Cove's for \$295 p.p., dbl. occ. Space is limited. Valid April 5 to Dec. 22, 2003.

BAHAMAS OUT ISLANDS

Charming, unspoiled and seductive, the Out Islands will sweep you off your feet. Here's your primer to diving—and choosing—one of these appealing islands.

BEST DIVES The Abacos. Like a giant apostrophe, this archipelago stretches northward on the east end of Little Bahama Bank. Diving is done on the reef line or in inland blue holes. In addition to Abaco, there are a number of smaller cays, like Green Turtle and Marsh Harbour.

Andros. There may be more blue holes—including the country's largest oceanic one—than people on Andros, which sprawls across nearly 140 miles of Great Bahama Bank. Along its east coast are 142 miles of barrier reef and the Tongue of the Ocean.

The Berry Islands and Chub Cay. An archipelago of cays on the edge of Grand Bahama Bank. The largest is Chub Cay, which features sheer walls, deep ledges, reefs and big fish.

The Biminis. A string of islands teetering on the edge of the Gulf Stream. Enjoy the sensation of bungee jumping without actually falling as you drift above a stunning drop-off that starts at 140 feet and plunges to 2,000.

Cat Island. Pristine and remote, this island offers shallow diving along the southwest coast, and deeper diving off the northeast shore. Eleuthera and Harbour Island. Eleuthera features a fringing reef with shallow sites and wrecks. Don't miss the action at Current Cut, where you'll rocket through the water like a fighter jet. The jumping-off point for diving here is Harbour Island.

The Exumas. These islands are scattered along the eastern leg of Great Bahama Bank for nearly 100 miles. This vast island chain has a little bit of everything—walls, reefs and deep blue holes.

Long Island. Divers can indulge themselves nearly everywhere here except for a windswept stretch on the western shore. Elsewhere, anything goes—walls, reefs, coral caves, shark encounters—plus dive trips to the virgin reefs of Rum Cay and Conception Island.

San Salvador. This tiny island offers a mighty wall that starts just 500 yards offshore in about 50 feet of water. From there, it falls off sharp and vertical.

Walker's Cay. The dive that put Walker's on the world's dive map is the Shark Rodeo, which attracts more sharks—up to 100 at a time—than any other in the Bahamas. Between encounters, you can dive shallow fringing reefs shot through with tunnels and caves. WEATHER From December to May, temperatures average 60F to 75F degrees, while summer temps average 80F to 85F.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Winter water temps drop to the 70Fs, while summer temps peak in the high 80Fs.

seaspace. 2003

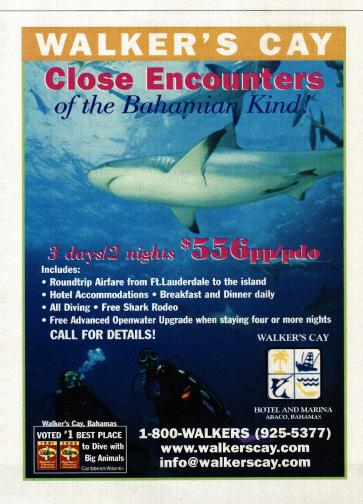
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AVERAGE VISIBILITY 80 to 100 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY You'll need proof of citizenship such as a passport or a birth certificate and driver's license.

DESTINATION LINKS Bahamas Out Islands Promotion Board at www.bahama-out-islands.com; Bahamas Diving Association at www.bahamasdiving.com.

READER COMMENTS

ABACOS G.S., BONITA SPRINGS, FLA.: "I liked the sharks, the swim-throughs and being close to dive sites." V.H., PEMBROKE PINES, FLA.: "Green Turtle Cay is a very small, quiet island. It's great for relaxing and taking advantage of the great diving. The people are very friendly." R.M., ITHACA, N.Y.: "It is a safe, friendly, clean island with low-key and deserted beaches."

BIMINI L.G., HUNTERSVILLE, N.C.: "This place is much more isolated than other destinations in the Bahamas. There's not another boat in sight most of the time. Stopping on Bimini is a treat. I spent a safe, fun evening there on our night in port." J.P., CHESTER, N.J.: "Easy diving. There's lots of variety to the dive sites (small shallow reefs, Bimini Barge and the wall dives at Tuna Alley). We even got a chance to swim with a pod of wild spotted dolphins." K.R., Virginia Beach, Va.: "Great marine life. The shark dives were the best I've seen. Great photo ops."

EXUMAS M.B., MEMPHIS, TEMM.: "There's a lot of diversity, a lot of color on the reefs, many shallow dives and long bottom times. The week went too fast." J.C., CITRUS HEIGHTS, CALIF.: "The weather and water were both warm and perfect." M.W., WEST JORDAN, UTAH: "The underwater environment is very pristine. We only saw one other dive boat the whole week."

LONG ISLAND K.K., LIVINGSTON, N.J.: "This was a very dive-friendly destination. The diversaster was knowledgeable, helpful and very accommodating. The shark dive was thrilling." J.A., Harrison Township, Mich.: "The corals were in nice condition '

SAN SALVADOR D.J., RALEIGH, N.C.: "The marine life was abundant, and visibility was consistently 80-plus feet. Of particular note were a few hammerhead sharks (in addition to reef sharks), octopus, rays, lobster, giant crab and some near-blinding schools of fish. We were also entertained in San Salvador by a mother dolphin and her nine-month-old calf, who was constantly trying to grab the attention of the divers." K.L., CHICAGO, ILL.: "We saw hammerheads and turtles everyday." B.S., Satellite Beach, Fla.: "There were a variety of wall dives. We had a knowledgeable staff and the support from the boat crew were all pluses."

WALKER'S CAY T.L., St. Petersburg, Fla.: "I loved diving with all the sharks at the Shark Rodeo. This was my fourth trip to Walker's Cay and I always have a good time. I will be going back again and again!"

ABACOS

Brendai's Dive Center, Ltd. (800) 780-9941, (242) 365-4411 web: www.bren dal.com

Dive Abaco! (800) 247-5338, (242) 367-2787 web: www.diveabaco.com In 2003, we're celebrating 25 years of service in Marsh Harbour and the Abacos. We're affiliated with NAUI, PADI, YMCA and participate in the universal referral program. We also offer dive and hotel packages, scuba instruction, rental equip-

ment and guided underwater tours. In addition to diving the Fowl Cay Undersea Preserve, we offer night, wreck and shark observation dives, and inland blue holes diving. package: 8 days, 7 nights accommodations for 6 in a luxurious 2bedroom, 2-bath Marsh Harbour condo with a full kitchen, pool and beach, 5 days of diving (two tanks per day), tanks, weights, weight belts, applicable taxes and service charges, \$629 p.p., quad, occ.

Treasure Divers - Bahamas (242)

365-8465 web: www.treasure-divers.com We're a small operation providing personalized, friendly service. We offer equipment storage, hot-water showers at the dock and are centrally located in the heart of Treasure Cay. package: Please visit web site for specials.

ANDROS

Small Hope Bay Lodge (800) 223-6961, (242) 368-2014 web: www.SmallHope. com The Andros barrier reef is the third longest reef system in the world. It begins just one mile offshore at around 10 feet, with walls that slope down to 70 feet and plunge down 6,000 feet. Only a handful of dive operations work this 140-mile-long reef. Since 1960, Small Hope Bay Lodge has been owned and operated by the Birch family. package: 8 days, 7 nights all-inclusive package includes beachfront cottage, meals, evening hors d'oeuvres. open bar, 3 dives daily, 1 night dive, hotel taxes, tolls, service charges and airport taxi transfers, \$1,500 for adult diver; \$1,240 for teen diver, through Dec. 20, 2003.

BIMINI

Bill & Nowdla Keefe's Bimini Undersea (800) 348-4644, (242) 347-3089 web: www.biminiundersea.com Owner/operators are on site. We're the only operation in the Bahamas to offer wild dolphin excursions. package: 8 days, 7 nights, from \$950, includes 18-21 dives, hotel and ground transfers.

Frog International, Inc. (954) 963-0757 web: www.thedrymartini.com

Scuba Bimini (800) 848-4073, (954) 462-3400 web: www.nealwatson.com ■ Fast and friendly. Resort is on premises. package: 2 nights includes taxes, 4 dives, air from Ft. Lauderdale, transfers, tanks, weights and belts, \$380 p.p., dbl. occ.

EXUMAS

Exuma Scuba Adventures (800) 525-2210, (242) 336-2893 web: www.exu mascuba.com Much of the waters surrounding the Exumas have been declared a national underwater park, so there's a great variety of marine life at depths generally less than 70 feet. Caverns and blue hole diving available. package: All-day scuba adventure includes two-tank morning dive, one-tank afternoon dive, box

lunch on deserted cay, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (minimum three people).

HARBOUR ISLAND

Valentine's Dive Center (800) 383-6480, (242) 333-2080 web: www.valentines dive com

LONG ISLAND

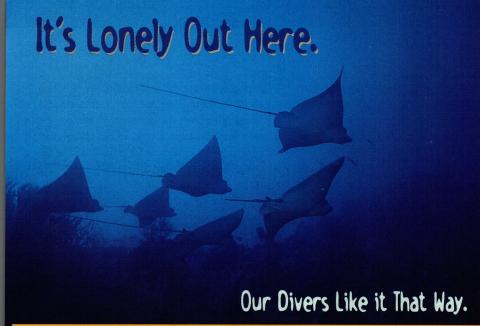
Stella Maris Resort Club (800) 426-0466, (800) 426-0466 web: www.stella marisresort.com One of the longest operating dive operations in the Bahamas. Diving here is truly diverse, with something for everyone, from snorkelers to experienced divers. package: 7-Night Scuba-Inclusive Package-Ocean-view hotel accommodations, round-trip flight from Nassau to Stella Maris, 3 meals daily, diving, including Shark Reef, Conception Island wall, world's deepest blue hole and Comberbach, taxes, service charges, transfers, 3 drinks each day, \$1,527 p.p., dbl. occ. Valid from April 28 to Dec. 20, 2003.

SAN SALAVADOR

Riding Rock Inn Resort and Marina (800) 272-1492, (954) 359-8353 web: www.ridingrock.com

WALKER'S CAY

Sea Below at Walker's Cay Hotel and Marina (800) WALKERS (925-5377), (954) 359-1400 web: www.walkerscay.com Walker's Cay is the only location in the world to quarantee mature bull and lemon shark interactive workshops. We have always taken pride in marine conservation, scientific behavioral research and interactive shark educational workshops. Beautiful 100-acre private island resort. package: 3-day package includes roundtrip airfare from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., to the island, hotel accommodations, breakfast and dinner, daily housekeeping and meal gratuities, 2 dives in the morning, 1 dive in the afternoon, free Shark Rodeo dive, \$556 p.p., dbl. occ.













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800-223-6961 email: SHBinfo@SmallHope.com web: www.SmallHope.com

Read Our On-Line Dive Guide at www.bahamasdiving.com BAJA, MEXICO Just over the California state line, Baja is where the desert meets the sea, an immense peninsula that adjoins the Pacific along the west coast and the Sea of Cortez on the east. Among divers, the large ocean animals found off the 800-mile-long Baja peninsula are legendary: whale sharks, gray whales, dolphins, giant Pacific manta rays and schools of sharks such as scalloped hammerheads.

La Paz and Loreto on the southern interior and Los Cabos (Cabo San Lucas and San Jose Del Cabo) at the southern tip are the staging areas for dive expeditions. Don't expect Caribbeanstyle vis or coral formations, but do expect great diving with a lot of pelagic action.

BEST DIVES Most of the marine habitats around Loreto, La Paz and Los Cabos were protected by the Mexican government during the '90s. West coast or east coast, day boats from towns along the southern shores head to seamounts and pinnacles for big-ticket pelagics. The greatest concentration of marine life is found on seamounts, rocky pinnacles that are encrusted with sparse layers of marine growth.

Out in the deep, 220 miles southwest of Cabo, is the Socorro island chain, also known as Islas Revillagigedo, an uninhabited, volcanic archipelago that offers tremendous diving on its lavaforged flanks. Live-aboard boats out of Cabo San Lucas make

WEATHER Hot, balmy summers with highs in the 90Fs and pleasant winters, when temperatures range from 60Fs at night to 80Fs during the day.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Mid-80Fs in summer and mid-60Fs in winter. The diving is year-round in the Sea of Cortez, but the best time is late June to early November.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Fluctuates from 70 feet in winter to 90 feet in summer.

TRAVEL SAVVY A passport is always the best option, but U.S. and Canadian citizens can get by on an original birth certificate and photo ID. You'll be issued a tourist visa on arrival. Keep it—you need to turn it back in when you leave. Divers in Los Cabos may be asked to pay an additional fee as a chamber donation. The fee will cover any deductible should you need the chamber's services. **DESTINATION LINKS** The Los Cabos Tourism Board at www.vis itcabo.com; Baja Travel Guide at www.bajatravel.com.

READER COMMENTS

K.B., Oxnard, Calif.: "There's always a chance for some high-voltage, big-animal encounter. Every day of a seven-day dive trip there was something amazing-dolphins, pilot whales, giant mantas, orcas and a whale shark. Amazing. This was my eighth trip here." J.B., MONUMENT, COLO.: "I liked the exceptionally warm water. Getting to a decent dive site only took minutes and the costs were reasonable for diving." R.S., Rio Rancho, N.M.: "I enjoyed seeing the different sea life the Pacific has to offer—a nice change of pace from the Caribbean." S.M., SANTEE, CALIF.: "I got face-to-face with sea lions." P.H., CENTRALIA, WASH.: "This is my third trip to La Paz to dive in the Sea of Cortez. Every trip has been better than the previous one. We always see large animals." C.B., BOZEMAN, Mont.: "Humpback whales were calving; we saw whales offshore every day."

Amigos del Mar de los Cabos

(800) 344-3349, (624) 143-0505 web: www.amigosdelmar.com Comfortable boats. Excellent service and safety record. We were also chosen to handle the dive operations aboard the luxury live-aboard Solmar V. We now have two completely customized trimarans. Both have lots of space, shade area and bathroom facilities. Although both trimarans can accommodate more than eight persons, we seldom do in order to ensure maximum comfort and service for our clients. The newest addition to our fleet is a 25-foot runabout. This fast boat was custom-built with a freshwater shower, camera dip and marine head. Its speed allows us to get divers to remote adventure sites. Once there, we'll locate the best spots. package: Two-tank boat dive. \$66; fourth day is discounted 50 percent during the season.



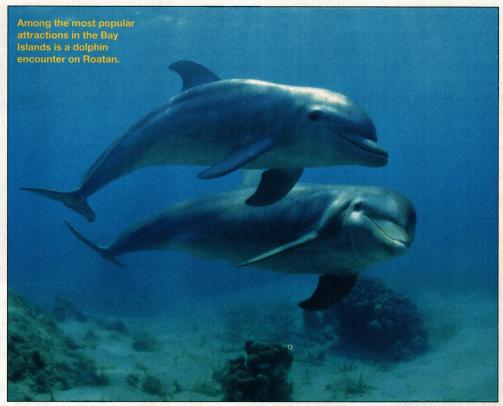
Baja Expeditions (800) 843-6967, (858) 581-3311 web: www.bajaex.com ■ We provide comfortable dive boats with heads, swim step and shaded seating areas. Our onboard cook prepares fresh meals and happy hour is served while heading back to port. We own and operate the 52-foot motor vessel *Rio Rita* and 28-foot *Thresher* dive boats. Season runs late May through November. package: Hotel and day diving packages start at \$375 p.p., dbl. occ., for 3 nights hotel and 2 days diving. Up to 3 dives per day, including breakfast, lunch, snacks and happy hour.

Cabo Acuadeportes (001) 52-624-143-0117 web: www.cabowatersports.com ■ We work with small dive groups. We pride ourselves on our safety record, our service and our professionalism. We have only top-notch equipment and personnel. We have full-time NAUI, PADI and SSI instructors on staff who will make sure you have a positive dive experience. We have large freshwater rinse tanks for dive and photo gear, and we provide complimentary secure storage. Dive with us once and you will come back for more.

Funbaja Adventure (800) 667-5362, (011) 52-112-15884 web: www.deepdiscover ies.com ■ Funbaja has the finest fleet of fast boats in La Paz. Dive the best sites in the Sea of Cortez in comfort. We also offer camping safaris, sea kayaking adventures and special whale shark expeditions from June to November. package: 6-day, 5-night package with 4 days of two-tank boat dives, breakfast daily and lunch on dive days, airport transfers and tax, \$695 p.p., dbl. occ. (2002 rate).

Land's End Divers (011) 52-62414-32200 web: www.mexonline.com/landsend. htm Our dive operation is located directly in front of the departure dock at the Plaza Las Glorias Hotel. If you need to use rental equipment, ours is of the best quality and is the newest in Cabo. We offer three daily departures, seven days a week. PADI and SSI resort facility, billingual staff and all staff is trained in Medic First Aid. package: 2 days of two-tank dives at local sites and 3 days hotel, \$375, plus taxes.

Shark Society Loscabos (011) 52-624-14-79-443 web: www.shark-society-loscabos.com Customer-oriented service is our #1 goal.



The Cortez Club (011) 52-612-1216120 web: www.cortezclub.com Unsurpassed service that is geared toward a hassle-free and relaxing dive experience. Our custom-built boats are the fastest in the area. PADI 5-star Gold Palm IDC center. We limit groups to a maximum of eight divers per divemaster/instructor to ensure personalized service. All guides are at least instructors and are all trained in Medic First Aid. All boats carry first-aid kit, VHF radio and oxygen. We handle all gear: load, unload, rinse daily in fresh water and store it. We have the Sunset bar, watersports, retail shop and our own jetty. We offer the most complete, safe and pleasurable service in the area. package: Special Promotion-3 days diving, 4 nights accommodations, \$480. 5 days diving, 6 nights accommodations, \$760. 7 days diving, 8 nights accommodations, \$990. All prices p.p., dbl. occ., and are subject to 10 percent sales tax. Packages include accommodations at Howard Johnson La Concha Beach Resort, airport transfers, two tanks per day, weights, divemaster/instructor, lunch and soft drinks on dive days.

BAY ISLANDS Starting a mere 10 miles off Honduras's coast lie three large islands-Roatan, Utila and Guanaja—and 65 smaller ones, including Cayos Cochinos. The Bay Islands are the northern tips of the volcanic Bonacca Ridge, and the waters here support fringing, patch, barrier and seamount reef structures. Here in the warm Central American waters are wrecks, macro photography opportunities and pristine seamounts. There's literally something for everyone—no matter the skill level-from hardcore wrecks, peaceful reefs, deep walls, exhilarating dolphin encounters and intriguing macro photo ops. BEST DIVES The 300-foot Odyssey, the islands' newest wreck, rests upright on a sandy patch in 112 feet of water off Roatan's north wall. The 187-foot Jado Trader is perhaps Guanaja's most popular dive, a wreck sitting on its side in 90 to 110 feet of water and stuffed with silversides, and covered in sponges and sea fans. Utila's Black Hill is a pinnacle that comes to within 35 feet of the surface and offers a chance to see jacks, hammerheads or a whale shark. Cayos Cochinos' Toon Town is macro paradise with an unbelievable array of critters including arrow crabs, flamingo tongues and blue bell tunicates.

WEATHER Daytime temps hover in the mid-80Fs and fall to the high 60Fs at night. The rainy season occurs from October through January.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Low 80Fs in summer to high 70Fs in winter.

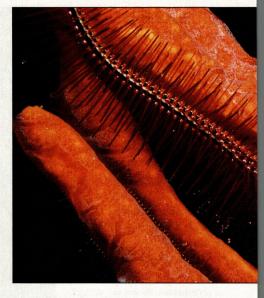
AVERAGE VISIBILITY Averages 80 feet, but can top out at 120 feet at some offshore seamounts. Runoff during the rainy season, October to January, can limit vis to between 50 and 75 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY Eco resorts and bungalows are the lodging of choice in the Bay Islands. Expect ceiling fans and vented screen windows with porches. If air-conditioning is a

priority, check with your resort before booking. Sand flies and mosquitoes can be fierce, but are controllable with judicious use of a DEET-based repellent. Valid passports are required for U.S. and Canadian citizens; a tourist visa is typically issued for travelers with round-trip tickets.

DESTINATION LINKS The Honduras Institute of Tourism at www.letsgohonduras.com.

www.fantasyislandresort.com



READER COMMENTS

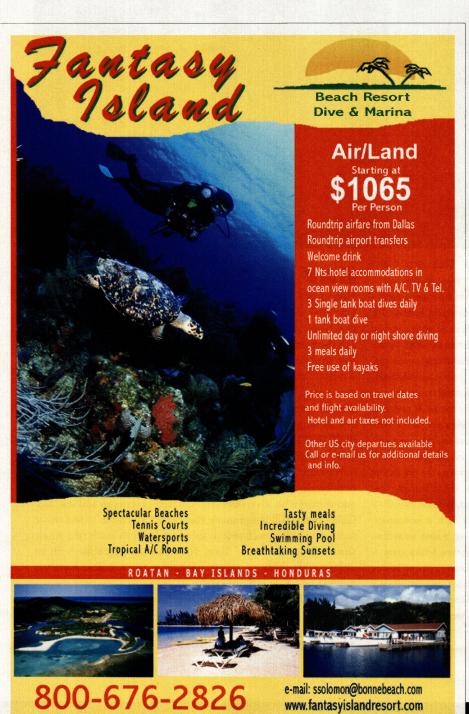
GUANAJA J.G., FARGO, N.D.: "I particularly liked the underwater structure."

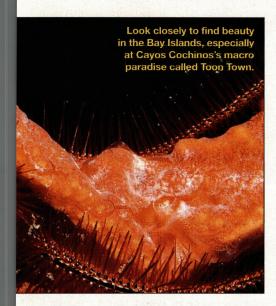
ROATAN J.P., ODENTON, MD.: "The reefs are incredibly healthy and beautiful, the animal and fish life is abundant and the visibility is at times unlimited. We will definitely be back." B.M., ARDEN, N.C.: "Roatan has some of the Caribbean's best wall diving. The diversity of coral and sponge life was breathtaking. I saw barrel sponges larger than a diver and they were plentiful. It was a macro photography dream site."

UTILA H.H., APTOS, CALIF.: "I enjoyed seeing whale sharks, spotted rays, dolphins, seahorses and octopus. Almost every dive included one or more of the above. The lack of strong currents on most dives allowed us to look at the little critters such as seahorses." S.R., VANCOUVER, B.C.: "We spent an entire afternoon swimming with a group of dolphins who swam into the main bay area-two hours of free fun! We felt privileged as beginners to get to dive in such an amazing place." C.C., MAPLESVILLE, ALA.: "I loved the quiet, laid-back atmosphere and I liked the funky third world atmosphere. There's very good wall diving with lots of tropicals, rays, etc."

GUANAJA

Villa On Dunbar Rock and Nautilus Dive Resort (952)-953-4124 web: www.usdivetravel.com/R-HON DURAS-Nautilus.html High value, low cost, uniquely quirky geography. Dunbar Villa is likely the only dive lodge in the Caribbean that is built directly atop a large rock dome jutting from a tranquil island bay, only 250 yards from Guanaja's south shore.





You literally can fish off the balcony of your room. The dive shop and an old antebellum-style mansion are located on the southern shore at Nautilus Dive Resort. Views from atop Dunbar Villa, about 50 feet up, extend for many miles along the fringing reef. package: 7 nights in oceanfront room, all meals, round-trip island transfers, 5 days of three-tank guided boat diving (tanks and weights provided), night dive, two tanks on sixth day, taxes, \$739 p.p., dbl. occ. Reef preservation fee and airport departure tax not included.

Posada del Sol (800) 642-3483, (011) 504-237-4982 web: www.posadadelsol.com What sets us apart is "barefoot elegance," emphasis on service and the ambience of a Spanish villa set on 76 acres. Private and secluded, international cuisine, tennis courts, swimming pool, gym and weight room, massage and beauty treatments. Scuba and light tackle fishing. Lots of activities and adventure with fun and relaxation. package: 7night, all-inclusive package includes accommodations in oceanor mountain-view room, 3 meals per day, unlimited snorkeling, free use of kayaks, mountain hiking, beach barbecue, sunset cruise, bazaar day with local handicrafts, weight room and gym use, welcome cocktail, meet upon arrival on mainland and in Guanaja, airport transfers, daily two-tank morning dives, onetank afternoon dive, unlimited shore diving and snorkeling, night dive, weights, belts, tanks, \$900 p.p., dbl. occ. Custom video and photo services. Instruction and certification available. Small groups receive fresh fruit and towels in dive boat. Bilingual divemasters, spa and wellness services, yoga classes, relaxation therapies and more.

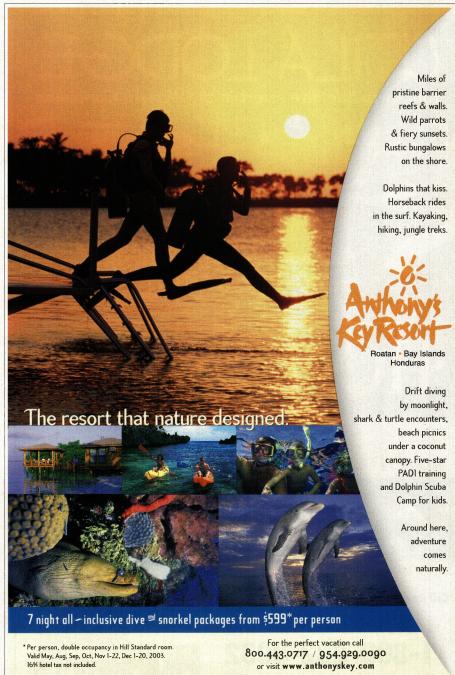
ROATAN

Anthony's Key Resort (800) 443-0717, (954) 929-0090 web: www.anthonyskey.com Owned and operated by the same family for more than 30 years. High repeat rate, emphasis on

attention to detail and customer service. package: 7-night dive or snorkel packages from \$599 p.p., dbl. occ., include accommodations in standard room, 3 meals daily, 3 one-tank boat dives daily, 2 night dives, buoyancy control workshop, weights, tanks, weight belt, horseback riding, kayaking, canoeing, daily dolphin shows. welcome island cocktail, Island Fiesta Night on the Key, tropical picnic on Tabyana Beach, entrance to Roatan Museum, fish ID slide show and Roatan airport transfers.

Bay Islands Beach Resort (800) 4-ROATAN, (610)

399-1884 web: www.bibr.com ■ Dive resort with B&B atmosphere. 15 rooms on 45 acres of oceanfront property, so guests can enjoy quiet vacation spot. Staff loves to share stories of the island with guests. Smaller resort, boats carry eight to 10 people, schedules are flexible. package: 10th Anniversary Special Weeks added on to standard package at no additional cost. VIP special packages for past guests. Package includes 15 boat dives, 1 night dive, unlimited shore diving, guided night snorkels in Natural Aquarium Snorkel Trail and famous Spooky Channel, air-condi-



INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

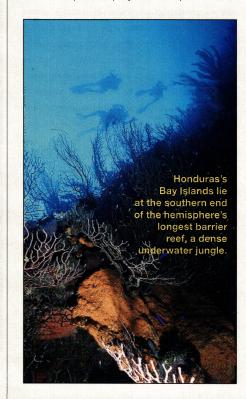
tioned ocean-view room, 3 meals daily, airport transfers, free welcome drink and more, from \$750 to \$865 p.p. (high season) and \$655 to \$770 p.p. (low season). Snorkel and vacation packages also available. Special packages for cruise ship visitors looking for small group island experience, include diving, snorkeling and beach-bumming packages limited to 12 people.

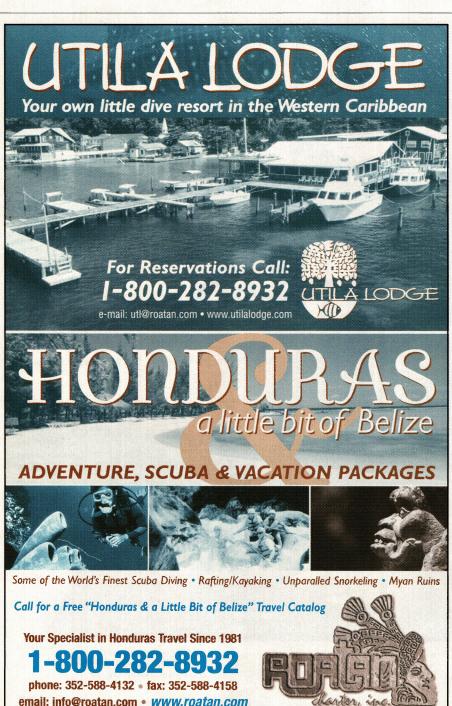
CoCo View Resort (800) 282-8932, (352) 588-4132 web: www.cocoviewresort.com ■ 24/7 shore diving is guaranteed to be incomparable. Some of the best barrier reef wall dive

sites are right off the beach, literally "a snorkel away from the bar." Famous CoCo View Wall, Newman's Wall and the wreck of the *Prince Albert* are just a few strokes from your oceanfront room. Two boat trips daily plus optional "drop-off" dives round out one of the most complete dive programs found anywhere. Weather permitting, you'll be offered optional inter-island boat trips and whale shark spotting trips to Utila Island. package: 7-night dive package includes welcome cocktail, airport transfers, 3 full meals daily, barbecues and picnics on private Hawksbay Cay,

unlimited 24/7 beach diving that includes barrier reef wall diving, wreck of the Prince Albert, night diving, 2 boat dive trips daily including one tank at a selected site, and optional drop-off wall dive (up to 4 boat tanks daily), ocean kayaks, \$775 p.p., dbl. occ. Fantasy Island Beach Resort (800) 676-2826, (011) 504-455191 web: www.fantasyislandresort.com Protected south shore boat dive sites are just minutes away from the dive shop. More than 50 dive sites, characterized by spectacular crevices and tunnels opening to breathtaking walls, offer excellent visibility, abundant fish and brilliant corals. Good diving is accessible approximately 40 yards from the beach. We have SSI- and PADI-certified divernasters, six dive boats, taking from five to 20 divers on dive trips. Full-service dive shop offers a large selection of equipment for rental. Resort courses and certification courses are available. There is a hyperbaric chamber on premises. Fantasy Island offers the ultimate in guest comfort and luxury with tastefully decorated, air-conditioned rooms, satellite TV, refrigerator, telephone and amenities, including a freshwater swimming pool and Roatan's only lighted tennis courts. Guests can unwind in intimate indoor and outdoor lounges, and the restaurant is one of the finest in all of the Bay Islands, served by a courteous staff. We offer an outstanding culinary selection, including sumptuous seafood steaks, native specialties and deli-

Inn of the Last Resort (888) 238-8266, (011) 504-445-1838 web: www.innoflastresort.com Small and private with emphasis on individual attention. Atmosphere more like house than hotel. Emphasis on quality of food and personal service.





package: 8-day, 7-night package costs \$999 per couple if you book direct through the resort. Includes room, meals, 3 dives per day, 1 night dive per week, unlimited shore diving, happy hour snacks, airport transfers and more.

Oak Bay Resort (011) 504-435-2337 web: www.roatan diving.com — Certified professionals lead all boat dives. Snorkelers and shore divers will enjoy our reef, which is only a few minutes from shore. Boat divers will enjoy a larger variety of what Roatan has to offer, including wrecks such as a DC-3 that was sunk several years ago. We offer SSI certification courses. Oak Bay is a small resort located in the Oak Ridge area of Roatan. Clothing-optional sun area. package: 7 nights accommodations, all meals, 12 boat dives, unlimited shore diving, \$425 plus tax. Special discount for advanced open-water course.

Reef House Resort (800) 328-8897, (210) 681-2888 web: www.reefhouseresort.com ■ Located on a key above the reef. Small, secluded, comfortable, all-inclusive resort. Reef House wall accessible by stone jetty for shore diving day or night, immediately in front of resort. package: Accommodations, all meals, 2 boat dives per day (three tanks), 1 night dive per week, unlimited shore diving day or night, tanks, weight belts, weights, unlimited air, \$690 p.p., dbl. occ., plus 16 percent tax; \$650 p.p., triple occ., plus 16 percent tax.

UTILA

Laguna Beach Resort (800) 66-UTILA, (337) 893-0013 web: www.utila.com Set on own private peninsula with private beach, excellent access to shore diving. Sip a cool rum punch and savor delectable island cuisine served at the ocean-view restaurant and bar. Laguna Beach has added four new cabins, bringing the total capacity to 36 guests. There are 13 bungalows, including eight individual bungalows with a king-size bed; four duplex units with two queen-size beds in each (eight rooms); and one duplex bungalow with a king-size bed in each (two rooms). The duplex units each have their own small porch and a common pier. All rooms are air-conditioned with private bathroom and hotwater showers. Dive instruction, sportfishing charters and island excursions are also available. Utila is the natural corridor for whale shark activity with numerous sightings throughout the year. package: 7 nights, 8 days, in air-conditioned bungalowstyle accommodations, 6 days of diving, including 3 boat dives daily, 2 night dives weekly, unlimited shore diving, round-trip airport transfers on Utila, 3 buffet meals daily, unlimited use of kayaks, \$795 p.p., dbl. occ., plus 16 percent tax.

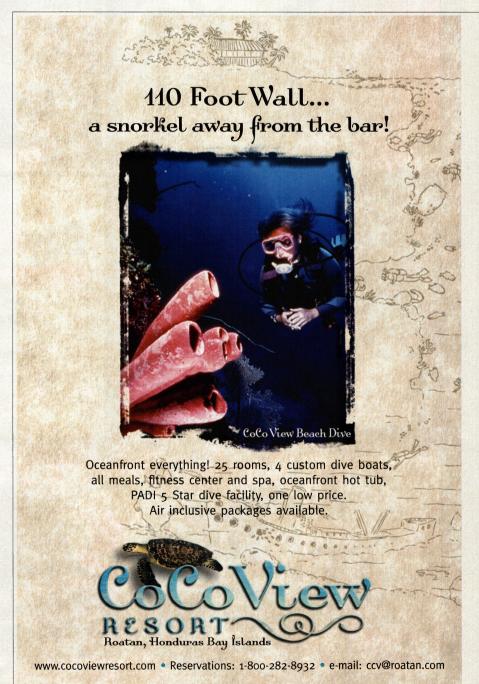
Utila Dive Centre-Mango Inn (888) 322 DIVE, (011) 504-4253326 web: www.utiladivecentre.com ■ Utila Dive Centre-Mango Inn is a small operation, with emphasis on easygoing and friendly service. Small groups preferred, up to 12 divers. Schedules are flexible, personalized packages available. A PADI 5-star Gold Palm Resort and Instructor Development Center, UDC is dedicated to dive instruction and providing safe,

memorable underwater experiences. We offer a variety of dive experiences for divers at all levels of experience. The shallow coral spur-and-groove formations are perfect for beginner divers. The north side of the island offers advanced divers the opportunity to do some deeper diving at the drop-offs where the continental shelf meets the island at Turtle Harbor Marine Reserve. The walls start at just 15 feet and drop vertically down to over 3,300 feet. Utila also has some spectacular sea mountains that rise from the ocean floor to just a few feet from the surface. package: 7

nights in an air-conditioned cabin, 3 dives per day for 6 days, 1 night dive, all breakfasts and dinners, Utila airport transfers, welcome cocktail, all taxes included. \$659 p.p., dbl. occ.

■ PADI 5-star CDC, hyperbaric chamber on site. package:

Special prices on scuba diving certifications, open-water through instructor.





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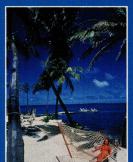


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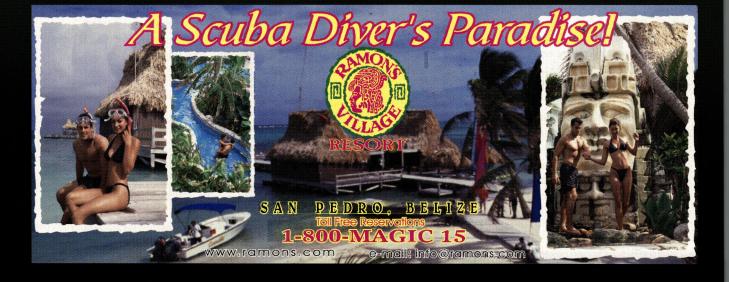
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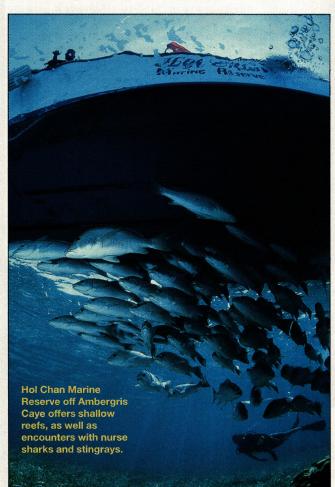
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INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

between Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and Guatemala has a frontrow seat on the hemisphere's largest barrier reef, which lies just offshore. Boasting a variety of dive and topside experiences unequaled by countries 10 times its size, Belize packs a mighty vacation wallop—pristine dive sites off the country's three atolls, big animal encounters in Hol Chan Marine Reserve, frequent whale shark sightings in the south, remote resort getaways, Mayan ruins, deep-sea fishing, jungle trekking, wildlife sanctuaries and the world-famous Blue Hole.

BEST DIVES The Elbow at Turneffe Islands Atoll is one of the country's most prolific wall dives, where swift currents along the drop-off bring in big pelagics, including jacks and permit, as well as weirdly warped barrel sponges. Shark Ray Alley in Hol Chan Marine Reserve off Ambergris is Belize's version of Stingray City, where snorkelers can swim with rays and nurse sharks. Laughing Bird Caye off Placencia is a popular picnic spot for snorkelers, but divers will love the reefs offshore, where macro critters abound. WEATHER Belize's climate is tropical, but a Caribbean breeze moderates hot summer temps on the coast, cayes and atolls. Expect summer highs in the mid-80Fs and lows in the mid-70Fs. Winter



is cooler, with highs in the low 80Fs and lows in the high 60Fs. **AVERAGE WATER TEMPS** The waters off Belize are bathtub-warm, ranging from the high 70Fs in winter to mid-80Fs in summer. **AVERAGE VISIBILITY** On the barrier reef and atolls, visibility is often 100 feet or more, but can be a bit lower inside the massive reef. **TRAVEL SAVVY** The topography of this small country is surprisingly varied, so pack accordingly—beach attire and sturdy shoes for hiking the interior and climbing Mayan ruins, loose cotton clothing for warm days and a light windbreaker for cool nights. **DESTINATION LINKS** Visit the Belize Tourism Board's web site at www.belizetourism.org.

READER COMMENTS

D.T., Boise, Idaho: "The combination of inland and underwater adventure opportunities make it a great destination. Go for the eagle rays, nurse sharks, giant grouper and inland spelunking as well as the Mayan ruins." S.W., Roseville, Minn.: We saw a manta ray, spotted eagle rays, tarpon, stingrays and turtles. The coral was healthy and abundant and the sites were thick with jacks, goatfish and many tropicals." S.P., Dillon, Colo.: "The people, the wildlife and the weather were all awesome!" E.R., Mesa, Ariz.: "On my last dive, 30 or more dolphins circled above. It was spectacular." T.W., Spokane, Wash.: "Very good diving. The people were friendly and helpful. There were excellent shore activities, historic sites, jungles, etc."

AMBERGRIS CAYE

Amigos Del Mar (011) 501-26-2706
web: www.amigosdive.com ■ Personalized,
professional, 15 years of service. We dive Blue
Hole, Turneffe Atoll. Local and night dives.
Instruction available.

Aqua Dives Belize (800) 641-2994, (954) 462-3400 web: www.aquadives.com ■ Experienced, knowledgeable staff. We dive anywhere every day. Mayan tours. package: 7 nights accommodations at Aqua Marine Suites, room taxes, tanks, weights and belts, 5 days of two-tank local diving, transfers, round-trip inter-island air, \$680 p.p., dbl. occ.

Belize Tradewinds (800) 451-7776, (011) 501-226-2822 web: www.scubadiving belize.com package: Check web site or call us for our up-to-date packages.

Blue Hole Dive Center, Belize (011) 501-226-2982 web: www.bluedive.com
Lonely Planet says "Blue Hole Dive Center is known for the competence and professionalism of its staff." On one of the best natural beach areas of Ambergris. package: 7 nights at Banana Beach Resort, 5 days diving (11 dives), full-day trip to Lighthouse Reef to dive Long Caye and Half Moon Caye, and the Great Blue Hole, air transfers, from \$699 p.p.

Gaz Coopers Dive Belize (800)
499-3002, (011) 501-26-3202 web:
www.divebelize.com ■ Specializing in tours to
Belize, including exclusive diving services for
divers looking for small groups and personallized service.

Playa Blanca Dive & Beach Club (888) 772-9937, (888) 772-9937 web: www.divebelize.com Brand-new, small, beachfront dive resort. Offers personal service by keeping groups small. package: 8 days, 7 nights in luxury beachfront accommodations, 5 days of two-tank boat dives (10 dives), welcome cocktail, continental breakfast and dinner each day, airfare from Belize to Ambergris Caye, airport transfers to and from resort and taxes, \$999 per diver; \$793 per nondiver, dbl. occ., through Dec. 14, 2003.

Ramon's Village Resort (800) 624-4215, (601) 649-1990 web: www.ramons.com
■ Palm-thatched cabanas, convenient location, full-service property. PADI IDC facility.
package: 7 nights accommodations, taxes, daily breakfast and 6 days of two-tank dives, \$963.69 p.p., dbl. occ., effective May 15 to Dec. 20, 2003.

Reef Divers (011) 501-226-3134 web: www.reefdivers.com We have earned our rep-



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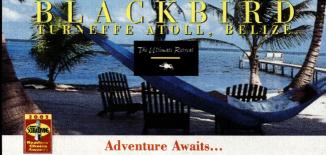
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INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRE

utation as the best and most professional dive operation in Belize through years of experience. package: 7 nights accommodations, 4 days of two-tank dives, Blue Hole excursion, round-trip airfare from Belize International to San Pedro. hotel transfers and taxes, \$829 p.p, dbl. occ.

BELIZE CITY

Sea Sports Belize (011) 501-223-5505 web: www.seasportsbelize.com

Hugh Parkey's Belize Dive Connection (888) 223-5403, (011) 501-223-4526 web: www.belizediving.com We are one of the closest mainland operators to the atolls and the Great Blue Hole.

CAYE CAULKER

Belize Diving Services (800) 498-2282, (011) 501-226-0143 web: www.belize divingservices.com Divers divided according to experience. package: 3-day package includes Hol Chan Marine Reserve (2 tanks), Turneffe Atoll (3 tanks and lunch) and Sargent's Caye (2 tanks), equipment and free T-shirt, \$225.

DANGRIGA

STEPHEN FRINK

Blue Marlin Lodge (800) 798-1558, (011) 501-522-2243 web: www.bluemarlin lodge.com Whale shark diving close to the lodge. Tours available to Mayan ruins and jaquar reserve, package: All-inclusive, 4 nights accommodations, 3 meals daily, assistance at the airport, airport transfers, 3 days diving (2 dives daily and 1 night dive), tanks, weights and belt, welcome drink, 7 percent room tax and 8 percent sales tax, \$1,095 p.p., dbl. occ. Tobacco Caye Diving (011) 501-614-9907 web: www.tobaccocayediving.com Shop is located over the water. Diving on all three atolls. Whale shark expeditions. package: 7 nights accommodations, meals, 6 days diving, 2 night dives, unlimited shore diving and transfers from the Dangriga airstrip, \$999. Book online and get a free bottle of rum or T-shirt.

GLOVER'S REEF ATOLL

Glover's Atoll Resort (011) 501-520-5016. (011) 501-614-7177 web; www.glovers. com.bz Private nine-acre island in marine reserve, only 12 cabins, 80 square miles of diving. package: Week-long stay in thatch cabin on the beach, \$199 p.p., plus hotel tax; \$149 in tents or dorm; \$99 for camping. Includes round-trip boat from Sittee River to island with 20 percent discount on 10 dives.

HOPKINS

Hamanasi Dive & Adventure Resort (877) 552-DIVE, (011) 501-520-7073 web: www.hamanasi.com Dive all

three of Belize's atolls. Rainforest adventures. per day except Friday, \$1,645 p.p., dbl. occ. Dive the longest barrier reef in

package: Reef and Rainforest Special-7 nights accommodations in beachfront rooms or treehouses, air and land transfers within Belize, continental breakfast, 7 dinners and choice of 5 adventure trips. Upgrades to Glover's Reef, Lighthouse Reef and Turneffe Atolls available. Price is \$1,160 p.p., dbl. occ., until April 30, 2003; \$999 p.p., dbl. occ., from May 1 to Dec. 14, 2003.

the Western

Hemisphere one day, visit Mayan

ruins the next.

Second Nature Divers (011) 501-523-7038 web: www.belizenet.com/divers. html Maximum group size is eight divers. Eco-friendly dive guides. Specialist trips to remote areas of the barrier reef. package: 3 days, 7 dives, tanks and weights, \$250 with minimum of 6 divers. Accommodations on cave or mainland available.

LIGHTHOUSE REEF

Lighthouse Reef Resort (800) 423-3114, (863) 439-6600 web: www.scuba belize.com Located 50 miles out in the Caribbean on a two-square-mile island with miles of reef to explore and only 22 guests. package: Saturday to Saturday weekly package-7 nights in waterfront private cabana, airport transfers, all meals, 17 dives, including the Great Blue Hole and 1 night dive, 3 tanks

(011) 501-523-3239 web: www.rumpoint.com We have 22 seaside cabanas and air-conditioned garden suites. The first member of PADI International Resort Association in Placencia; affiliated with DAN. package: 7 nights accommodations, diving, meals, taxes and service charge, from \$1,250 p.p., dbl. occ.

ST. GEORGE'S CAYE

St. George's Lodge (800) 678-6871, (941) 488-3788 web: www.gooddiving.com Closest dive operation to the mainland with over-water thatched roof cottages. Only a mile from the reef. package: Special Value Weekairport transfers, accommodations, all meals, 3 dives a day including a night dive, tanks, weights and taxes, \$1,587 to \$1,931 p.p. See web site for dates.

TURNEFFE ISLANDS

Blackbird Caye Resort (888) 271-3483. (305) 969-7947 web: www.blackbir dresort.com Secluded private island resort. Pristine diving locations. package: 7 nights, 3 dives per day, meals, 1 night dive per week, trip to Blue Hole, Half Moon Cave and Long Cave Wall at Lighthouse Reef Atoll, round-trip transfers to and from Belize City, from \$1,295 p.p. Turneffe Flats (800) 815-1304, (605) 578-1304 web: www.tflats.com Close dive sites and unlimited shore diving. package: 7 nights accommodations, 3 dives per day, unlimited shore diving, day trip to Blue Hole and Lighthouse Reef, tanks, weights and weight belts, land and sea transfers, 3 meals per day, and more, \$1,595 plus taxes from Jan. 11 to May 31; \$1,525 plus taxes from May 31 to Aug. 30; \$1,495 plus taxes from Aug. 30 through Dec. 27, 2003.

Turneffe Island Lodge (800) 874-0118, (713) 313-4670 web: www.turne ffelodge.com Offers scuba diving, fishing and snorkeling. We're five minutes from the famous Elbow and visit sites such as the Zoo, Sayonara and Gail's Point each week. package: 7 nights standard accommodations, airport transfers, all meals and snacks, 17 tank dives, day trip to the Blue Hole/Lighthouse Reef atoll, 1 night dive, taxes and all staff gratuities, \$1,868.07 p.p., dbl. occ.

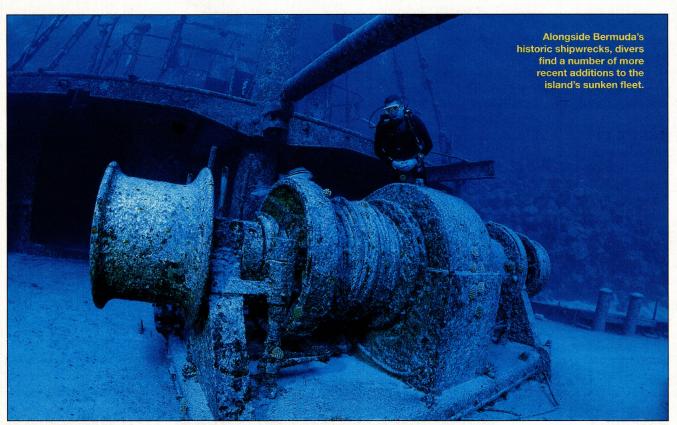
PLACENCIA

inn at Robert's Grove and Dive Center (800) 565-9757, (011) 501-523-3565 web: www.robertsgrove.com Newest dive operation in the area. package: 8 days, 7 nights, 5 days diving, meals, air and land transfers, complimentary resort amenities, taxes and service charge. Call for rates.

Nauti-One Dive Shop (800) 688-0377, (011) 501-523-3595 web: www.nauti calinnbelize.com Whale shark dives March through May. Dive boat has walk-through transom for easy entry. package: 7 nights beachfront air-conditioned room, meals, 5 days of two-tank boat dives, transfers from Placencia airstrip, tax and tip. Check web site for rates.

Rum Point Divers (888) 235-4031,

TRAVEL DIRECTORY



BERMUDA More than 400 shipwrecks, spanning five centuries of maritime history, surround the island of Bermuda. Most got there by running aground on the island's broad, shallow reef, which happens to be the northernmost coral reef system in the western hemisphere. Together, the wrecks and reefs create a diver's playground with some of the Atlantic's best visibility and dive sites that rarely exceed 60 feet in depth.

BEST DIVES Marie Celeste, a Confederate blockade runner that ran aground in 1864, Constellation, a four-masted schooner sunk in 1943, and L'Herminie, a 300-foot frigate that sank in 1838 and spilled 60 cannons, are three signature old-school wrecks. The Hermes, a 65-foot freighter, and the King, a 55-foot tugboat, are examples of modern wrecks sunk intentionally for divers. For a reef dive, you can't beat Southwest Breakers, a maze of shallow tunnels filled with silversides.

WEATHER Bermuda has two seasons: a May-to-November summer (85F during the day; in the 70Fs at night) and a springlike winter from December to April (60Fs to 70Fs during the day; 50Fs to 60Fs at night).

AVERAGE WATER TEMP From 75F to 85F in the summer; dipping to the mid-60Fs in winter. Dive operators recommend a full 3mm wetsuit for summer; and a full 5mm to 7mm suit for late fall, winter and early spring.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY 70 to 100 feet of vis is normal, with an occasional 150-foot day.

TRAVEL SAVVY Need to get away? Flight time to Bermuda is about two hours from most East Coast cities. Proof of citizenship and a return ticket are required and while passports are preferred, a birth certificate and valid photo ID will suffice for U.S. and Canadian citizens.

DESTINATION LINKS Bermuda Tourism at www.bermuda tourism.com. For a complete overview of wreck dives, visit www.divebermuda.com.

READER COMMENTS

R.S., WYNDMOOR, PA.: "Beautiful island surrounded by all types of diveable wrecks. Large parrotfish keep an eye on the divers, but we were too engrossed in the wrecks to pay much attention to the wildlife."

Water Blue Divers and Watersports Ltd. (888) 434-8323, (441) 234-1034 web: www.divebermuda.com We operate year-round and visit more sites for wreck and reef diving than any other shop. package: 3 nights, accommodations, gratuities, taxes, airport transfers, 2 two-tank dives, dive gear storage, \$313.50 p.p., dbl. occ.

Fantasea Diving (888) DO-A-DIVE, (441) 236-6339 web: www.fantasea.bm

Scuba Look (441) 293-7319 web: www.scubalookbermuda.com

STEPHEN FRINK / WATERHOUSE

Nautilus Diving, www.bermuda.bm/nautilus Only PADI 5star IDC in Bermuda, only operator with two dive boats visiting different sites daily, only operator in Bermuda with nitrox. package: Free "try dives" offered daily.

South Side Scuba (888) DO-A-DIVE, (441) 238-1833 web: www.fantasea.bm

INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL

BONAIRE Pistol-shaped Bonaire, outermost of the ABC group off Venezuela's north coast, is the embodiment of "Diving Freedom." Thanks to the protection of Bonaire's marine park for over 20 years, the reefs, accessible from shore, are among the healthiest in the Caribbean. The real treat is the freedom to load the rental truck with tanks and drive to any one of more than 60 dive sites. Across the channel in the island's lee is Klein Bonaire, a marine reserve that is well worth the trouble of hopping on a dive boat to get there.

BEST DIVES The map you get with your rental car is your ticket to finding the shore dives marked by the island's trademark yellow-painted roadside stones. Kralendijk's Town Pier and Salt Pier on the southern coast are two stunning macro dives, their pilings colonized by reef. Bonaire's signature wreck dive, the Hilma Hooker, a 236-foot freighter lying on her side in 60 feet of water, is one of the most popular in the Caribbean. Uninhabited and pristine, Klein Bonaire's sloping southern walls rank among the healthiest in the region. A great time to dive Bonaire is the seventh annual Bonaire Dive Festival, June 14 to 21, 2003.

WEATHER Temperatures hover between 75F and 85F depending on the season. Onshore trade winds keep the humidity at bay. AVERAGE WATER TEMP 80F average in summer with winter drops to the mid-70Fs.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY 60 to 100 feet or greater, depending on currents and plankton.

TRAVEL SAVVY To dive in Bonaire, you must take a short orientation and purchase a \$10 Bonaire Marine Park medallion before heading out to dive. A new ferry service recently began between Bonaire and Curação, a boon for divers hoping to hit both destinations on one trip. Dutch guilders (Nafl) are the local currency. No diving on the day you fly is the law in Bonaire, so be aware when booking interisland flights. Departure tax is US\$20.

DESTINATION LINKS Tourism Corporation Bonaire www.infobonaire.com, or the Bonaire Marine Park at www.bmp.org.

READER COMMENTS

I.P., WEST CHICAGO, ILL.: "Shore diving is easy. Underwater life is abundant. Seahorses and frogfish were seen frequently this year." C.G., BROOKLYN, CONN.: "There's lots of marine life and easy access to diving." Y.J., San Francisco, Calif.: "Shore diving was great, You could set your own schedule." M.R., LORTON, VA.: "Bonaire is still a quiet, lowtraffic island. This means that the dive sites are not crowded with divers crawling over one another to see what there is to see."

Black Durgon Inn & Scuba Center of Bonaire (011) 599-717-5736 web: www.blackdurgon.com ■ A small. private oceanside resort with a tropical ambience offering excellent diving and snorkeling on Small Wall and Black Durgon Reef. We are an SSI instructor training facility, but cater to all agencies. We teach swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving and one-day familiarization through instructor training. Bringing new and timid divers to a proud comfort level is our forte. package: 7 nights in oceanside room, breakfast daily, diving, \$390 p.p. See web site for more information and photos.

Blue Divers (011) 599-717-6860 web: www.bluedivers.com We are a small dive shop with 10 studios and personal service package: \$69 p.p., per day, including one studio, a rental car and unlimited air fills.

Bon Bini Divers Bonaire (011) 599-

717-5425 web: www.bonbinidivers.com Bon Bini Divers offers all the amenities of a larger dive facility, while maintaining a friendly and personable relationship with our diving guests. A high level of individual service is what we are known for. package: 7 nights accommodations at Lions Dive Resort, 6 days of shore diving and 1 boat dive each day, and all taxes, \$621 p.p., dbl. occ., in a Regency studio; \$672 p.p., dbl. occ., in a Royal onebedroom; \$599 p.p., quad occ., in an Imperial two-bedroom. Valid for the months of May or July 2003, and subject to availability.

Bruce Bowker's Carib Inn (011) 599-717-8819 web: www.caribinn.com Smaller resort dedicated to diving. Very rea-



BONAIRE



Top Caribbean Dive Destination

CAPTAIN DON'S HABITAT



Diving 24 hours a day, 365 days a year..."the home of diving freedom." Choice of cottages, deluxe junior suites and oceanfront villas. Introducing our new "Eco-Tours" program. Technical Divers, we're your home on Bonaire, first with Nitrox, first with Re-breathers & Tri-Mix. PADI ★★★★ Instructor Development Center and a TDI Training Center.

Reservations: Maduro Dive Fanta-Seas (800)327-6709 • Fax: (305)438-4220 Email: info@maduro.com • Website: www.HabitatDiveResorts.com

DIVI FLAMINGO BEACH RESORT



World class diving, snorkeling & marine life. With its beautiful beachside location, the 129-room resort features Divi Dive Bonaire, PADI Gold Palm dive operation, with 24 hour access to tanks, two pools, two restaurants, two bars & Bonaire's "Barefoot Casino". New fitness center features cardiovascular equipment & free weights. Divi Flamingo is just minutes from shops, restaurants and the airport.

Call toll free: 800-801-5550 or 800-661-3483 • Fax: 919-419-2079 Website: www.diviresorts.com • Email:dividive@diviresorts.com

LIONS DIVE RESORT



With a complete newly renovated shorefront, located directly on the oceanfront Marine Park. Lions Dive Resort Bonaire offers 24-hour shore diving, easiest access into the Caribbean sea and daily boat departures. You will enjoy an affordable luxury in an intimate resort with spacious fully equipped condominiums.

Call toll free: 866-LIONSDIVE (866-546-6734) Email: us-canada@lionsdivebonaire.com • Website: www.lionsdivebonaire.com

SAND DOLLAR CONDOMINIUM RESORT

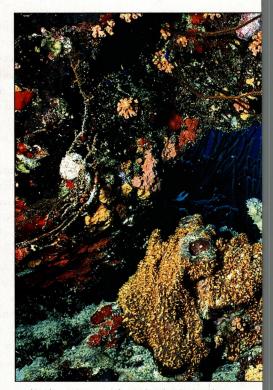


Voted one of the Top 20 Dive Resorts in the World: Rodale's 2003 Readers Choice Awards. Relax in a spacious, fully equipped studio, 1, 2 or 3-bedroom waterfront condo overlooking the #1 house reef in the Caribbean. New PADI facilities at Bonaire Dive & Adventure offering shore and boat diving, instruction, guided snorkeling, kayaking, mountain biking, nature tours, children's programs and more.

Call toll free: 1-800-288-4773 • Fax: 407-774-9322 Website: www.sanddollarbonaire.com • Email: USReservations@sanddollarbonaire.com

American Airlines/American Eagle, Air Jamaica and DCA serve Bonaire from the U.S.





sonable prices on accommodations and retail equipment sales. Buddy Dive Resort (866) GO-BUDDY, (011) 599-717-5080 web: www.buddydive.com Buddy Dive is a full-service dive operation that has it all: comfortable boats, exceptional staff, a complete inventory of rental gear and a well-stocked retail center, a unique two-lane air and nitrox fill station, and a lively house reef perfect for diving and snorkeling day and night. Enjoy the freedom of unlimited shore diving packages with plenty of 80and 63-cubic-foot tanks available 24 hours a day. Buddy's is a DAN member and PADI 5-star Gold Palm Resort and Universal Referral Center, offering every level of instruction in several languages. package: Drive & Dive Package-8 days, 7 nights accommodations, 6 days of unlimited shore diving, plus 6 boat dives, 7 days rental vehicle, daily breakfast buffet, airport transfers and all government taxes, starting from \$715 p.p., based on 6 people sharing a three-bedroom apartment.

Captain Don's Habitat (800) 327-6709, web: www.habitatdiveresorts.com Founded by Captain Don Stewart in 1976, who is credited with the introduction of scuba diving to Bonaire. The Captain still makes his weekly visits to the resort. Dive operations are a PADI 5-star and Instructor Development Center and TDI Training Facility offering boat dives daily and 24hour unlimited shore diving all year. First with nitrox, rebreathers and tri-mix. package: Dive & Drive-7-night package includes accommodations, airport transfers, daily buffet breakfast, welcome cocktail, rum punch party, 6 boat dives, 24-hour unlimited shore diving, free air refills, tanks, weights, belt, government taxes, service charges, gratuities and shared vehicle rental (taxes



and surcharges not included), from \$844 p.p., dbl. occ. (quad. occ. from \$670).

Dee Scarr's Touch the Sea (011) 599-717-8529 web: www.touchthesea.com ■ Shore diving with the sole emphasis on learning about marine animals.

Dive Bonaire (800) 367-3484, (011) 599-717-8285 web: www.diviresorts.com ■ Dock is walking distance from town. House reef is a minute from the room. Experienced dive staff, best boat fleet in Bonaire. package: 777 package—7-night, 6-day package with full American breakfast daily, two-tank boat diving and unlimited shore diving, \$777 p.p., dbl. occ.

Photo Tours Divers (011) 599-717-3460 web: www.bonphototours.com Flexibility, personal approach, personal attention, best prices on the island. For the most adventurous dives at remote sites. package: Drive and dive packages include unlimited shore diving or 6 boat dives, weights, belt and tanks, starting from \$463 p.p., per week.

Toucan Diving (800) 766-6016, (781) 821-6016 web: www.toucandiving.com ■ Enjoy short, uncrowded boat trips to spectacular sites on the leeward side of Bonaire and Klein Bonaire. PADI 5-star Gold Palm IDC training center features multilingual staff and instruction from beginner to advanced. Photo/video shop with courses, rental and instruction. Nitrox, TEC/REC, rebreather instruction and rental, Aquakids program including SASY, Bubblemaker and the PADI SEAL program. package: From April 16 until Dec. 15, 2003, ask about our 6th day of diving free and "2-for-1" diving promotions with participating Bonaire Hospitality Group partners.



Bonaire Pros.com Makes Booking Bonaire Travel Easy!

USA & Canada: 800/328-2288

Call, email or surf on over for the best dive package deals, lodging choices and travel advice along with money-saving airfares to Bonaire. Our helpful web site has the info you need to save time and money planning the perfect dive vacation.

Let the Bonaire professionals at Great Southern Island Adventures reserve your Bonaire vacation the easy way.



800-748-8733 info@bonairepros.com www.bonairepros.com

BRITISH COLUMBIA Can vou

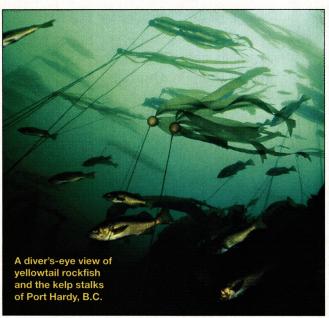
keep a secret? The scenery in British Columbia, both topside and under water, is sublime. Pods of orcas, white-sided dolphins and sea lions reign supreme in these emerald waters. Underwater life is so immense and prolific that it grows in mounds-fish atop shells containing crabs sitting next to barnacles combing the water for food. An incredible array of anemones, urchins and starfish are everywhere. Walls are so densely blanketed with soft corals that a dive light transforms them into disco-bright carpets of color. No doubt about it, the water is cold-about 48F at depth in August. Warm-water diver wimps need not apply. But don't say we didn't tell you what Pacific Northwest divers have been saying for years—this is awesome diving.

BEST DIVES Most dives involve drifting with powerful currents along the walls that form the bases of islands. The currents here are swift and can change direction in a matter of minutes, so dives are timed to begin at slack tide. Browning Wall is a deep (250-foot), vertical and current-swept site that is covered with orange and red soft corals, giant Metridium anemones and nudibranchs. Thanks to the nonprofit Artificial Reef Society of British Columbia (ARSBC), B.C. boasts the best wreck diving in North America including four huge destroyer escorts—the Chaudiere, MacKenzie, Columbia and Saskatchewan.

WEATHER Most diving is done May through October, when air temps drop to the low 50Fs at night and reach daytime highs in the 70Fs.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Summer surface temps can hit 60F, but temperatures in the 40Fs persist at depths below 30 feet. Winter temps average in the mid-40Fs.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Visibility ranges from 40 to 120 feet, depending on currents and seasons.



TRAVEL SAVVY U.S. citizens don't need a passport or visa, but do need proof of citizenship and a photo ID.

DESTINATION LINKS Tourism British Columbia at www.hello bc.com or Travel and Tourism Planning at www.travel.bc.ca.

READER COMMENTS

J.B., RIDGEFIELD, WASH.: "We went to Porpoise Bay and saw all the good dives, such as the HMCS Chaudiere, Skookumchuck Narrows and Stagg Wall. All of the dive sites had outstanding diving. The scenery was majestic. Overall, this is a great place to go. I don't have one bad thing to say about it." V.M., LARSEN BAY, ALASKA: "The scenery was excellent, the people were friendly and the off-season prices are very reasonable. The U.S.-Canadian exchange rate makes your dollar go farther ... On the negative side, the water is cold, and not for those who are not prepared for this environment. However, the rewards in marine life and wreck diving opportunities more than make up for the cold-water environment." L.C., Kelowna, B.C.: "There's an incredible diversity of life. I saw lots of giant Pacific octopus and wolf eels, as well as many varieties of nudibranchs and very healthy fish populations. I also saw one extremely large starfish and colorful fish eating anemones and lots of soft corals." M.L., VANCOUVER, B.C.: "Nothing in the tropics comes close to the Port Hardy area. The colors here are beyond imagination." D.S., Thompson, Mo.: "I played with the sea lions. I'm not sure who had the most fun."

Abyssal Diving Charters &

Lodge (800) 499-ABYS, (250) 285-2420 web: www.abyssal.com Deb and Earl are your hosts. Deb is a pastry chef and Earl is a chef with 20 years of experience. package: Day rate includes meals, accommodations, 2 boat dives, tanks, weights and air, CAN\$140, plus 7 percent tax. Groups of 6 or more staving for more than 3 days, CAN\$110, plus tax. Day dive rates, including tanks, weights and air, are CAN\$45 p.p., plus tax.

B.C. Dive Adventures, Inc. (604) 983-2232 web: www.bcdive.com

BC Dive and Kayak Adventures,

Inc. (866) 322-3483, (604) 732-1344 web: www.bcdive.com BC Dive Adventures is the only dive shop in the Vancouver area with its own 32-foot charter boat, the Adventure II. package: Two-tank boat dive, \$59 p.p.

Beaver Aquatics, Ltd. (250) 287-7652 e-mail: baquatics@connected.bc.ca

Browning Pass HideAway (877) 725-2835, (250) 753-3751 web: www.clave lla.com Our location is near Port Hardy, in the middle of the best diving and whale-watching area in British Columbia. package: 4 days, 3 nights package including accommodations, great home-style meals, 3 dives per day, from

\$495 p.p. Packages can include whale-watching, beach-walking, canoeing or kayaking between dives if you wish. Weeklong all-inclusive packages.

God's Pocket Resort (888) 534-8322, (604) 731-2052 web: www.godspocket.com We are on our own 500-acre island. No neighbors. package: God's Pocket Resort provides pickup services in Port Hardy the night before the first day of the charter, and drop-off services in Port Hardy the morning after the last day of charter. We provide food, accommodations. beverages, daily maid service, at least 2 boat dives per day, air, tanks and weights. Diving off our dock is unlimited based on your certification. Prices are as low as \$180 per diving day, plus an 8.2 percent tax. Packages range from 3 to 10 days.

Lowes Resort (877) 883-2456, (604) 883-2456 web: www.lowesresort.bc.ca Surrounded by natural beauty. package: 2 nights accommodations in a 2- or 3-bedroom unit with full kitchen and a two-tank dive, CAN\$160 p.p., based on a group of 10 (meals not included).

Ocean Explorers Diving, Ltd. (800) 233-4145, (250) 753-2055 web: www.oceanexplorersdiving.com Following a

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

strict code of ethics and a high level of standards, we maintain qualifying accreditation with the most recognized certifying agencies in the world, including PADI, SSI, IANTD and TDI. package: Dive getaways—2-day (5 dives) from CAN\$334 p.p., dbl. occ., plus tax. We can also do 4-day (10 dives) packages or customize a package to suit your requirements. They include round-trip airport transfers, hotel pickups, tanks, weights and bottled water. Accommodations of your choice at the Buccaneer Inn, the Howard Johnson Harbourside or the Best Western Dorchester.

Ogden Point Dive Centre (888) 701-1177, (250) 380-9119 web: www.dive victoria.com A world-class, ocean-side facility just steps from the water. British Columbia was just voted by Rodale's Scuba Diving readers as the best dive destination in the world.

Pacific Pro Dive & Travel (877) 800-3483, (250) 338-6829 web: www. scubashark.com Pacific Pro Dive is an IANTD and TDI technical training and instructor development facility offering all levels of training, including semi-closed and fully closed rebreather training, package: 2-day or 5-day

resort and spa packages, including two-tank boat dives per day, all transfers and seafood dinner, starting at \$175 p.p.

Rendezvous Dive Ventures,

Ltd. (888) 777-9994, (250) 720-9306 web: www.rendezvousdiveventures.com ■ Our personalized service and our experience is based on 30 years of diving in the Barkley Sound area. package: All-inclusive dive packages in secluded lodges off Barkley Sound, 2-day minimum, 10 guests maximum, call for details.

Rowand's Reef Scuba Shop (604)
669-3483 web: www.rowandsreef.com We
are centrally located in Vancouver and we're
ready to make your dive vacation unforgettable. package: Free divemaster-led group
dives every Saturday at 10 p.m. and every
other Wednesday at 6 p.m. Check our web site
for our multi-day trips.

Sunshine Coast Tours (800) 870-9055, (604) 883-2280 web: www.sun shinecoasttours.bc.ca ■ Access to temperate waters in and around Egmont, B.C., including Chaudiere, Skookumchuck Narrows, Agamemnon Channel and Jervis Inlet. package: Day trip, CAN\$89; US\$59 p.p.



cal wreck is a national park. On the bottom for 130 years, the signal cannon, large propeller and portholes are still clearly visible.

The BVIs are also home to the island of Anegada—and her 10-mile-long Horseshoe Reef that has claimed over 300 wrecks.

Miss tea time if you have to, and make the trip to the mystical boulders of The Baths, a world-famous snorkeling beach. **WEATHER** Temperatures range from 80F to 90F in the summer; 75F to 85F in winter.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Mid-70Fs in winter and mid-80Fs in summer.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY 60 to 100 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY Visitors will need a photo ID to enter, though a passport is best.

DESTINATION LINKS British Virgin Islands Tourist Board at www.bvitouristboard.com; British Virgin Islands at www.british virginislands.com.

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

The British Virgin Islands dapple the Caribbean's northern border, less than two miles northeast of St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands. But while physically close, there's a huge cultural gap. If you want to feel at home, don a swimming costume, be on holiday and say "I'm knackered" after a long day of diving when you're here. One guidebook writer pronounced the difference between the island groups to be the difference between American verve and British reserve. Bloody well said, chap.

"Nature's Little Secret" is the slogan for the emerald islands that comprise the BVIs, where development has yet to run roughshod over the very traits that make it a popular destination for sailing, scuba and solitude. Only a handful of the islands are inhabited, with most of the diving resorts clustered around the large islands of Tortola and Virgin Gorda. Regardless of which island you stay on, you're never more than a 30-minute boat ride from any dive site.

BEST DIVES The islands have some of the easiest beginner-friendly diving and snorkeling in the Caribbean. Visitors can dive with land-based operators, from commercial live-aboards, or rent a bare-boat and set your own course for a week. The wreck of the *R.M.S. Rhone*, located on the lee side of Salt Island, is a favorite for divers and snorkelers alike. The heavily encrusted and histori-

READER COMMENTS

J.M., ESCONDIDD, CALIF.: "We loved the warm, clear water. The people were friendly and the weather was beautiful. We had great visibility and lots of dive sites." W.J., LARGO, FLA.: "I saw healthy reefs in excellent condition. There's also excellent wreck diving." D.P., PARMA, OHIO: "Friendly people, beautiful beaches and nice marine life." D.B., Newburgh, N.Y.: "The water temperatures were very comfortable and the *HMS Rhone* is an excellent wreck."

AquaVenture Scuba Services

(284) 494-4320 web: www.aquaventure bvi.com ■ Large boat (35-foot twin diesel) certified for 16, but takes eight divers max. Ultra high level of personalized services. Frequent service to V.I.P.s. package: Five days of two-tank dives plus one night dive, \$350.

Blue Water Divers (284) 494-2847
web: www.ultimatebvi.com/bluewater ■ Blue
Water Divers has been operating in the BVIs
for the last 22 years. Our instructors have a
vast amount of knowledge of the area. We are
a favorite among residents and visitors alike.
We make diving easy.

Dive BVI Limited (800) 848-7078, (284) 495-5513 **web**: www.divebvi.com ■ If

you are looking for an adventurous dive operator, we are for you. We always seek out the best sites for the day's conditions and never settle for anything less. We find new sites every year. package: Package for Leverick Bay, Virgin Gorda—8 days, 7 nights, 5 two-tank dives, \$767 p.p.

Underwater Safaris (800) 537-7032, (284) 494-3235 web: www.underwatersa faris.com ■ We invented rendezvous diving more than 20 years ago and it remains the core of our business today. Our fast custom dive boats will meet you at selected anchorages within our service area and take you on a two-tank a.m. or one-tank p.m. tour. We specialize in small groups with an all-instructor crew.

INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

CANCUN & RIVIERA MAYA

In the Mayan language, Xel-Ha means "where the water is born," and the Xel-Ha lagoon on the east coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula was considered sacred by the Mayan Indians. In fact, the ancient Mayans revered the entire 75-mile stretch of Caribbean coastline that has become known as the Riviera Maya. Cancun and the surrounding area is no longer the place where you deplane and either indulge in spring break debauchery or head to the diving off Cozumel. Dive the Riviera Maya today, and you'll find yourself sharing with the ancient Mayans a spiritual affinity for the region's natural beauty.

BEST DIVES The shallow offshore reefs of Playa Del Carmen, Cancun and Isla Mujeres are popular with beginners, and farther south, Chinchorro Bank, a great oval of coral 100 miles south of Cozumel, is pristine and largely unexplored. Reef diving is often land-based and is offered by dive shops that operate out of resorts and coastal cities. The world's most extensive system of freshwater cenotes, which the Mayans believed were the entrance to the underworld, offers divers a chance to explore a fascinating ecosystem. The cenotes are often reached by a van ride into the jungle, where you may have to haul your gear a short distance to the entrance.

WEATHER Pleasant weather year-round, from 85F in the summer to 75F in the winter.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Mid-80Fs during summer and mid-70Fs during winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Consistently great. Plan on vis near 100 feet on deeper sites, less on shallow reefs, and more than 100 feet in the gin-clear cenotes.

TRAVEL SAVVY Proof of citizenship; either a valid passport or the combination of a birth certificate and driver's license is required. **DESTINATION LINKS** Mayan Riviera of Mexico at www.mayan riviera.com.

READER COMMENTS

B.M., West Nyack, N.Y.: "Diving the cenotes in the jungle was off-the-charts great. Daytime reef dives were shallow and very easy, with the most schooling fish I have ever seen in the Caribbean. The shallow depths provided good light for taking pictures. The night dive was great, too. I saw a huge six-foot-long sea turtle—the largest turtle I've seen in the Caribbean." B.F., El Cajon, Calif.: "Good to great dive value. I liked the fast drift dives. I saw great marine life, like eagle rays, tuna and small sharks." L.C., Lewis Center, Ohio: "Cancun was great, even though it definitely does not get the press that Cozumel gets."

Akumal Dive Adventures (877) 425-8625, (505) 992-3333 web: www. akumaldiveadventures.com Small dive groups, individual packages, expert instruction and cenote dives available. package: 4 nights, 6 dives, \$265 p.p. Hotel accommodations near the dive shop.

Dressel Divers (011) 34-96-356-1496
web: www.dresseldivers.com ■ We offer a 15
percent discount when your booking is prepaid.
package: Gorilla Package—4 to 5 days, one
excursion to Yucatan cenotes with two dives,
one excursion to Cozumel with three dives, one
night dive in Riviera Maya, five single dives in

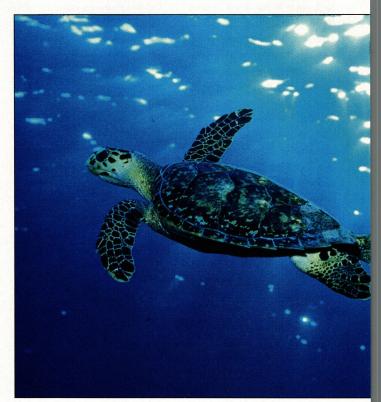
Riviera Maya, includes transfers, food, beverages and guide.

Manta Divers Scuba Center (011)
52-998-849-4050 web: www.mantadivers.
com ■ Our dive groups average six divers per
trip, so you get the best dive possible. We are
25 minutes from all dive sites.

Hidden Worlds Cenotes Park

(011) 984-87-78535 web: www.hidden
worlds.com.mx Hidden Worlds is the world's
largest cenote park for cave and cavern diving
as well as cave snorkeling. We are the only dive

Aquatech Dive Center (866) 6199050, (011) 52-984-87-59020 web: www.
cenotes.com ■ We offer the world's best in
cavern and cave diving with training from
beginner to technical. With the Mesoamerican
reef running along our coastline, the openwater boat diving and beach snorkeling is both
easy and fun. package: 8 days, 7 nights
accommodations, 13 dives (ocean, night and
cavern), all meals, airport transfers, beachfront
starting at \$925 p.p., quad. occ.



shop in the Riviera Maya specializing in cavern and cave diving, as well as jungle snorkel tours. We have six jungle buggies, as seen in the Imax film "Journey Into Amazing Caves."

Sealife Divers (011) 52-984-803-2866

web: www.sealifedivers.com ■ The service that
you will get at Sealife Divers is like no other in
Playa Del Carmen. We meet your needs and
exceed your expectations. package: 4 nights
accommodations, 3 days diving, 4 breakfasts, 4
ocean dives plus 2 cenote dives, from \$299 p.p.,
dbl. occ., plus local tax. 7-day package with 4
days diving, from \$464 p.p., plus local tax.

Tank-Ha Dive Center (011) 52-984-8730302 web: www.tankha.com ■ Dive trips to the reefs of the national park departing from our dive center in Playa del Carmen. A weekly fixed departure is arranged every Monday. Additional trips are organized when requested by groups of six to 10 divers. Main dive center located at the Hotel Maya Bric. We are a PADI Gold Palm Resort. package: 5 days, 4 nights accommodations, 2 days ocean diving (4 tanks), 1 day cenote diving (2 tanks), round-trip airport transfers, from \$280 p.p., dbl. occ.

INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

CAYMAN ISLANDS This trio of

Caribbean islands has been serving divers with consistent, high-quality scuba diving for decades. And the years of experience is evident in some of the most savvy, service-oriented and efficient dive operations in the world. You can always count on three things from the Cayman Islands—good visibility, great walls, and outstanding resorts and dive operators. Beyond that, there are also intriguing animal encounters like Stingray City and Sandbar, awesome wrecks like the *Balboa*, *Capt. Keith Tibbetts* and *Oro Verde*, and enough photo opportunities to fill an album. Family-oriented divers and those who enjoy nightlife will flock to Grand Cayman, while those who prefer quieter,



remoter getaways should beat feet to the Sister Islands—Little Cayman or Cayman Brac—or even Grand Cayman's East End. With dive sites just offshore and walls starting at 20 feet, getting down and out here is as easy as 1-2-3.

BEST DIVES Grand Cayman is ringed by more than 150 dive sites, but the most popular has to be Stingray City, where you hand-feed southern stingrays. Cayman Brac is known for spur-and-groove reefs and offers sheer drop-offs with a variety of vertical swimthroughs, but also boasts the enormous Russian warship, the MV Capt. Keith Tibbetts. Little Cayman's claim to fame is Bloody Bay Wall, which starts in water as shallow as 18 feet and drops off so steeply that you'll feel like you're freefalling.

WEATHER Mild year-round, the temperatures are in the 70Fs in winter and mid- to high 80Fs in summer.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Not much variance for these islands, with water temperatures ranging from 77F in the winter to about 82F in the summer.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY About 100 feet year-round, though it can increase in the summer to 200 feet and fall in the winter to around 7.5 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY The Caymans are on Eastern Standard Time and the Cayman dollar is fixed at a rate of CI\$1 to US\$1.25. U.S. dollars and credit cards are widely accepted.

DESTINATION LINKS Cayman Islands Department of Tourism at www.caymanislands.ky or www.divecayman.ky.

READER COMMENTS

GRAND CAYMAN E.F., ELMHURST, ILL.: "The East End of Grand Cayman is a wonderful location for experienced divers and new divers alike. It has just the right combination of excellent diving and fun topside activities." D.F., BROOKLYN, N.Y.: "The island has great year-round weather and warm waters with very healthy reefs, stark walls, great swim-throughs and abundant fish life." A.L., Jacksonville, Ore.: "Great visibility most of the time. The east end and south part of the island are the best ... I like the fact that Little Cayman and Bloody Bay Wall are nearby." E.B., Sheboygan, Wis.: "The walls and caves were amazing—beautiful black coral. I saw lots of sea turtles and an occasional ray."

LITTLE CAYMAN/CAYMAN BRAC M.D., SANTA CLARITA, CALIF.: "Absolutely breathtaking walls, tons of marine life and I saw turtles on every dive off Little Cayman. Truly, this is some of the best diving anywhere." K.L., BROOKLINE, Mass.: "We saw a wider variety of fish and marine life in one dive on Little Cayman than I have in four dives put together elsewhere." D.S., TORONTO, ONTARIO: "Excellent wall and reef diving." D.M., Lewisville, Texas: "Great walls and corals." R.Z., Peoria, Ill.: "Dive sites were easily accessible and covered a wide variety of reefs and walls."

CAYMAN BRAC/ LITTLE CAYMAN

Brac Caribbean & Carib Sands (866) 843-2722, (866) 843-2722 web: www.866thebrac.com ■ Enjoy luxury 1-, 2-, 3- or 4-bedroom condominiums located on a quiet lagoon just minutes from dive sites. All condos offer air-conditioning, TV and a fully equipped kitchen. The dive shop is located on site along with fine dining at Captain's Table Restaurant. package: For groups of 8 or larger, you can enjoy 7 nights accommodations, 5 days of two-tank diving, taxes and transfers for as low as \$649 p.p., quad. occ., in a 2-bedroom condominium.

Conch Club Divers at the Conch Club Condominiums (800) 327-3835, (727) 323-8727 web: www.conch club.com Conch Club Divers sets a new standard on Little Cayman for world-class facilities, diver-friendly services and safety standards. We feature a fully equipped dive shop on the premises and a custom-designed dive boat. package: 7-night dive package includes 6 days of two-tank morning dives, land transfers, \$922 p.p., quad. occ., for a two-bedroom townhouse. Valid for travel between April 26 and Dec. 15, 2003.

Divi Tiara Beach Resort (800) 661-3483, (345) 948-1553 web: www.diviresorts.

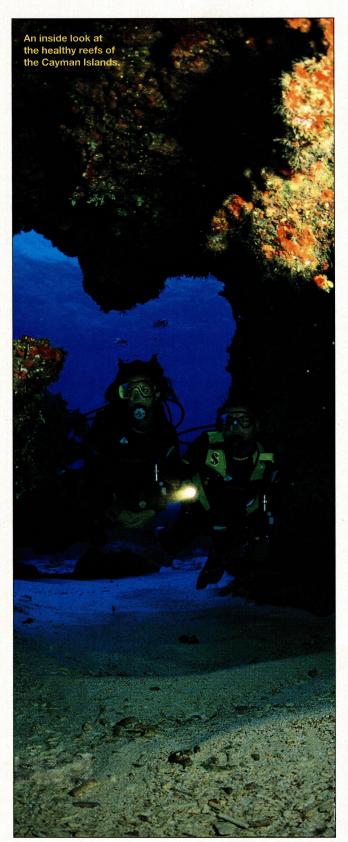
arrive. Tiara is also the home to the Nikon School of Underwater Photography. package: "Lucky 7" (7 nights, 7 breakfasts, 7 dinners) includes two-tank boat dive p.p., per day, which includes one to Little Cayman, a Russian Destroyer dive and unlimited shore diving. New reservations only, \$777 p.p., dbl. occ.

Paradise Divers (877) 3-CAYMAN, (345) 948-0001 web: www.paradisevillas.com

We have the shortest boat rides to Bloody
Bay and Jackson's Bay of all the dive operators. Small groups and guided dives available
on all dives. package: 7 nights and 6 days of
two-tank dives at Bloody Bay and Jackson's
Bay for \$1,064.48 p.p., dbl. occ.

Pirates Point Resort (345) 948-1010
web: www.piratespointresort.com ■ We interview each diver and find out what their interests
are, and what they would like to do for the week.
Repeat customers account for 80 percent of our
business. package: Package includes accommodations, 3 gourmet meals per day, \$1,395
per diver weekly, plus 15 percent service charge
and \$8 a night room tax per room, if booked
direct, April 15 to Dec. 15, 2003.

Reef Divers at the Brac Reef
Beach Resort (800) 594-0843, (727)
369-2507 web: www.bracreef.com ■ Reef
Divers is home to the most modern fleet of
boats in the Cayman Islands and maintains a
full-service dive shop on premises. "Valet" div-



ing at its best. package: Summer package includes 7 nights deluxe beach-view accommodations, 17 boat dives, 3 fabulous meals daily. all government and hotel taxes, service charges and airport land transfers, \$1,326 p.p., dbl. occ. Airfare is included on Cayman Airways from Miami. Airline taxes and departure fees are not included. Certain restrictions and blackout dates apply. Subject to availability. Valid for new bookings only through Sept. 1, 2003.

Reef Divers at the Little Cayman Beach Resort (800) 327-3835, (727) 323-8727 web: www.littlecay man.com Reef Divers has an ever-changing awareness of what each individual diver needs in both attention and dive difficulty. "Valet" diving at its best. package: Summer package including 7 nights, pool-view accommodations, 17 boat dives, breakfast, lunch and dinner daily, land transfers, hotel taxes and service charges, \$1,269 p.p., dbl. occ. Certain restrictions and blackout dates apply. Subject to availability. Valid for new bookings only for travel through April 18, 2003.

Sam McCoy's Diving Lodge (800) 626-0496, (345) 948-0026 web: www. mccoyslodge.com.ky = Located on the north side of Little Cayman with a five-minute boat ride to Bloody Bay Wall. Real Caymanian experience with authentic Caymanian food. package: Summer 7-night, 6-day diver package includes accommodations, 3 home-cooked meals per day, government taxes, airport transfers to and from the Little Cayman airport and diving (two-tank morning boat dive, unlimited afternoon shore diving and optional night diving), \$1,211.50 p.p., dbl. occ. Specials available in the fall.

Southern Cross Club (800) 899-2582 (in the U.S.), (619) 563-0017 web: www.south erncrossclub.com We're one of the top-rated resorts and dive operations in the world for three years in a row. We boast world-class sportfishing as well as diving, excellent food and an award-winning, international staff, package: 7-night, two-tank dive package, includes everything but the bar, \$1,900 p.p., dbl. occ.

GRAND CAYMAN Bob Soto's Reef Divers

Headquarters (Scuba

Sensations) (888) 698-7400, (345) 949-2871 web: www.bobsotosreefdivers.com We're the oldest dive operator on the island. Our staff takes great pleasure in customer service. We are a PADI 5-star IDC training facility offering advanced courses, divemaster and divemaster plus, resort pro management and scheduled IDC and IE courses. package: Cayman Madness 2003—Cayman Airways gateway, 7 nights accommodations, hotel and condo tax and services. 4 two-tank boat dives. 1 one-tank night dive, unlimited shore diving, underwater treasure hunt, from \$1,149 p.p., dbl. occ. Six consecutive weeks of diving and parties, Sept. 4 through Oct. 9, 2003. Visit

www.caymanmadness.ky.

Cayman Diving Lodge (800) TLC-(806)794-3466 www.divelodge.com We're a small, allinclusive, dedicated dive resort on the remote and pristine East End of Grand Cayman. Avoid the crowds and traffic and find out why the East End has the best diving in the Caribbean. package: 6-night package includes 3 boat dives per day (except on arrival and departure days), ocean-view accommodations, meals and transfers included, \$1,432 p.p., dbl. occ. Divetech (866) 622-9626, (345) 946-5658 web: www.divetech.com We are both recreational and technical, so we have a wealth of knowledge, and are happy to share it. We offer over 50 specialties, two-tank boat trips, all-day trips, interactive turtle release, scooters, rebreathers and lots of toys for eveyone to try out. package: Dive 'n Stav with Divetech and Cobalt Coast Resort-7 nights, 6 days of boat and shore diving. Packages for adventurous diving at Cayman's newest resort and most advanced diving center are available, including all you can eat and all you can dive, from \$1,163 p.p., dbl. occ. E-mail or call us for options. Check out our 5th night free summer H2GO! Specials on the web.

Don Foster's Dive Cayman (800) 83-DIVER, (345) 945-5132 web: www.donfos ters.com New location at Casuarina Point Marine Park. Boat, shore and night dives, Stingray City and instruction. package: We offer several packages with Comfort Suites. Check our web site for details.

Eden Rock Diving Center (345)

949-7243 web: edenrockdive.com ■ We offer small group boat diving packages in a large 42-foot boat with the very best unlimited shore diving. package: 7-day package includes 6 days of boat and shore diving with accommodations, \$899.80 p.p., dbl.

Fisheve of Cayman (800) 887-8569. (345) 945-4209 web: www.fisheye.com - Special attention and services are offered to underwater photographers and videographers. Fisheye offers unguided wall dives and computer-friendly dive profiles for experienced divers, while offering caring attention to new divers. package: 5 days, 4 nights accommodations at Sunshine Suites, 3 days of two-tank boat dives with Fisheye, free use of an underwater camera with film purchase while diving with Fisheve, \$555 p.p. in studio suite, \$625 p.p. in deluxe studio, and \$683 p.p. in onebedroom suite.

Jeff's Resorts (715) 686-2232 web: www.jeffsresorts.com Private diving, any way you like it, and easy, offshore private instruction and diving. After more than 20 years in Cayman, we offer the best rates and the most flexibility. package: \$99 for a private home per night (May through Dec. 15, 2003). \$40 to sail, snorkel or go on a seafood lunch trip to Stingray City.

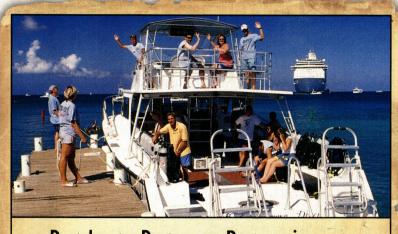
Ocean Frontiers at The Reef Resort (888) 232-0541, (345) 947-7500 web: www.oceanfrontiers.com Voted Grand Cayman's best. Our remote location is closest to the best diving on the island. package: Visit our web site for information on our current 3-night, 5-night or 7-night Rodale's Scuba Diving reader specials.

Peter Milburn's Dive Cayman, Ltd. (345) 945-5770 web: www.petermilburndivecayman.com Early departures for the best dive sites and back in time to do other things. package: To celebrate his 25th anniversary in his own business, Peter is offering "roll-back" prices until Dec. 1, 2003. All dives are now \$50. This is his way of giving back to the many divers that have supported him all these years.

Red Sail Sports Grand Cayman (877) 271-8458, (345) 945-5965 web: www.redsailcayman.com Red Sail Sports has partnered with Tortuga Divers at Morritt's in the East End, and now delivers dive and watersport services island-wide. Red Sail Sports and Tortuga Divers provide visitors with the best above and below the water. package: A custom dive package. Choose your own accommodations in Grand Cayman and enjoy daily diving with Red Sail Sports. Packages include daily two-tank morning dives, free afternoon boat dive, free sunset sail, free oneday computer rental, 50 percent off night dive, 10 percent retail discount, Red Sail Sports T-shirt and hotel transfers. Valid through Dec. 19, 2003.

Seaview Hotel and Dive Resort (800) 262-7686. (345) 945-0558 web: www.seaviewdivers.com We offer 24hour shore diving, boat diving and lodging under \$100. package: 7 nights accommodations and diving, \$693 p.p.

Sunset House Dive Resort (888) 281-3826, (345)



Best boats. Best crew. Best equipment.

New boats, new dock and over 45 years of diving the Caymans. Day dives, night dives, wall dives and wrecks, plus a PADI 5-Star Training Center. We have the best of everything for your ultimate diving adventure. Book your vacation now with the new Bob Soto's Reef Divers. The first name in Cayman diving.

For more information call (888) 716-7400 and visit our web site at www.bobsotosdiving.com





8 days, 7 nights • 6 days, 2 tank boat & unlim. shore dives • bkfst. & dinner daily. 5/1-12/14/03

Divi Tiara Beach Resort

The intimate Divi Tiara Beach Resort is world renowned for it's unlimited diving options! Dive Bloody Wall Bay, or a Russian Destroyer, and the largest underwater mountain range in the western hemisphere! A comfortable and relaxed resort with great restaurants and nightlife. Rejuvenate, dive, feast, relax- Tiara style

8 days, 7 nights • 6 days, 2 tank boat & unlim. shore dives. 4/16-12/13/03

Seaview Hotel & Dive Resort

The Seaview Hotel and Dive center is the oldest hotel and restaurant on Grand Cayman. A short walk to Georgetown. Located ocean front in beautiful south sound, with breath taking sunsets, and incredible diving less than 100 yards offshore. The Seaview Dive Center is the on site full service dive center featuring a brand new 30 foot dive boat.

Little Cavman Beach Resort

Little Cayman's Beach Resort's service and room amenities are outstanding. Home to Reef Divers and known as having the Best Wall Diving, Fish Life, Visibility, Healthiest Marine Environment, Dive Operation Resort, Destination...that's a lot of Bests.

dives • bkfst. daily • R/T transfer. 4/27-12/15/03

Sunset House

A "Diver's Dream" catering to today's diver, Grand Cayman's Hotel for Divers by Divers, located 1 mile south of George Town. Experience all-day 3-tank and half day 2-tank trips, rebreathers, deep walls, nitrox to mixed gasses, shore dive day or night. Everything you need: Sunset Divers. "My Bar" and Cathy Church's Underwater Photo Centre.

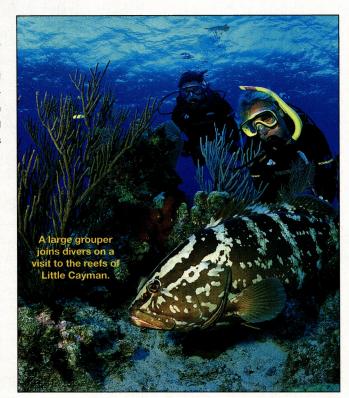
Cayman Islands Department of Tourism CAYMAN and Cayman Airways

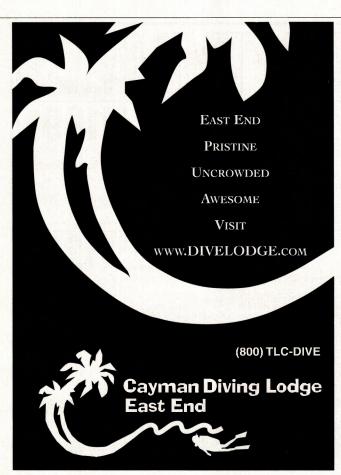


949-7111 www.sunsethouse. com/rsd.htm Sunset House is the "original" dive resort, built by divers, for divers. We have 57 diver-friendly rooms, an on-site dive operation called Sunset Divers, Cathy Church Underwater Photo Center, Sea Harvest Restaurant and the newly rebuilt "My Bar," featuring some "special" events and concerts this year. package: Check our web site for up-todate specials year-round or sign up for our monthly newsletter that informs you of outstanding specials.

Tortuga Divers Ltd. (877) RED-SAIL, (345) 947-2097 web: www.tortu gadivers.com, www.redsailcayman.com Quality staff, boats and equipment combined with a flexible and safe approach to looking after each diver's needs. The finest diving on Grand Cayman. package: Our 2003 Dive and Sail package—3 mornings of two-tank dives (includes tanks, weights and belt), \$285 with free one-tank afternoon reef dive, sunset sail and Tortuga Divers T-shirt. Visit our web site for other packages.

Treasure Island Divers (800) 872-7552, (345) 949-4456 web: www.tidivers.com Service has always been our priority and that's what sets us apart from other dive operations. The only dive operator with a dock on Seven-Mile Beach. Contact us for Grand Cayman's best dives. package: Great savings and dive specials daily.







INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

COSTA RICA Looking for a destination with as much adventure above water as below? Check out Costa Rica. Where else can you dive with hammerhead sharks, chase giant manta rays, climb an active volcano, swim beneath a rain forest waterfall and surf a remote beach all in one trip? The best diving is found on the Pacific Coast, where divers are frequently amazed by the abundance of fish, sharks and rays.

BEST DIVES Located 375 miles off the Pacific Coast, Cocos Island is one of the last wild places left on earth. Live-aboard cruises here start with a 36-hour crossing in rough seas, but the payoff is swimming with schooling hammerhead sharks and other big animals. For land-based divers, Costa Rica's Pacific Coast offers three options—the beach resorts on the Gulf of Papagayo in the north, the rustic jungle lodges of the Osa Peninsula in the south, and the resort towns of Quepos and Manuel Antonio in the central region.

WEATHER Mild year-round, with temperatures rarely exceeding 90F in summer or dipping below 75F in winter.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP High 70Fs to low 80Fs in summer; low 70Fs in winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Expect 30 to 60 feet with occasional peaks of 80 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY As of April 30, 2003, U.S. and Canadian citizens must have a valid passport (at least six months from expiration) to enter Costa Rica.

DESTINATION LINKS Costa Rica Tourism Board at www.tourism costarica.com; www.infocostarica.com.

READER COMMENTS

COCOS ISLAND D.B., New YORK, N.Y.: "Cocos is world-class. There are whitetips in such abundance you take them for granted, schools of hammerheads, silkies and massive schooling fish. The currents are intense with themoclines that are invigorating to say the least. The dive sites are pristine, and free from obvious human impact." C.M., MIAMMI, FLA.: "There's so much marine life and so many fish. I really liked the sharks—whitetips and hammerheads. I also saw marble rays."

GULF OF PAPAGAYO B.A., DENVER, COLO.: "Huge schools of jacks and barracudas so big at times they looked like giant amoebas moving through the water. Sharks on every single dive."

PACIFIC COAST GUANACASTE

Aquacenter Diving (800) 276-7501, (011) 506-352-4031 web: www.aquacenter diving.com PADI Resort dive operator. Kids' programs, snorkeling and kayaking. package: 4 nights, 3 days diving at Catalina Islands, breakfast, taxes, daily two-tank boat dives, 1 afternoon two-tank dive, kayaks, \$429 p.p., dbl. occ.

GULF OF PAPAGAYOBill Beards Diving Safaris de

Costa Rica (877) 853-0538, (954) 453-5044 web: www.costaricadiving.net ■ The largest, most experienced dive operator in Costa Rica since 1970. Nitrox, PADI, NAUI and NASE instructors. package: 8-day, 7-night accommodations, 4 dive days, afternoon horseback riding, river rafting, treetop canopy tour, breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners included, \$965-\$1,350 (divers); \$695-\$1,090 (nondivers). Based on dbl. occ., season and number of persons.

Ocotal Resort (011) 506-670-0321

web: www.ocotaldiving.com PADI 5-star Gold Palm resort with a beachfront and inhouse dive operation. Our divergasters ensure each diver fully enjoys their dive experience. package: Dive and Adventure Package-7 days, 6 nights, 4 days of diving, daily breakfast, white-water rafting, one night at Tabacon Resort and all transfers, \$1,132 p.p., dbl. occ. Resort Divers de Costa Rica (011) 506-670-0421 web: resortdivers-cr.com Three-tank dives to Catalina and Bay Islands with a minimum of two divers, lunch included. We carry, set up, rinse and store your equipment. package: 7 nights, 4 days, two-tank dives, all-inclusive resort, accommodations, meals and drinks, \$592 p.p., dbl. occ.; 7 nights

Rich Coast Diving Co. (800) 4-DIVING, (011) 506-670-0176 web: www.richcoastdiv ing.com Impeccable safety record and service. Small groups, no cattleboats. package: 7-night packages with 5 diving days includes taxes, breakfast daily, tanks, weights, guide, snacks from only \$497 p.p., dbl. occ.

at bed & breakfast, \$388 p.p., dbl. occ.

QUEPOS AND MANUEL ANTONIO

Costa Rica Adventure Divers,
Quepos / Manuel Antonio (800)
317-0333, (303) 838-0969 web: www.costari
cadiving.com Only dive operation in the
Quepos/Manuel Antonio area. One- and twotank dives, snorkeling and all PADI courses.
On-site certified instructors and divernasters.

OSA PENINSULA

Adventure Divers (800) 317-0333, (303) 838-0969 web: www.costarica diving.com PADI dive facility in Drake Bay. We know and dive more sites at Cano Island and Drake Bay. Offer daily trips to Cano Island and Corcovado National Park. Natural shark dives (no feeding). package: Accommodations, transfers, meals and diving, plus land excursion, \$715 p.p.; 5-night, 3-dive day and a land excursion, \$805 p.p., double standard or supe-

Jinetes de Osa-Costa Rica

Adventure & Dive Tours of Costa Rica

800-938-9767 www.adventuredive.com www.diveguideint.com/p1731.htm





AGUILA DE OSA

Located on the Osa Peninsula at Drake Bay & Corcovado, with diving at Cano Island. Best vis in all of Costa Rica dive areas, with large pelagic and BIG schools of marine life. "Best above & below water adventures." All inclusive pkg, wine with dinner & all dive gear. 4 nts, 3 days dive, jungle tour, all meals & transfers,

One Night Free & Free Meals \$952. PP Dbl. Occup. Save 180. PP

VALID MAY 1ST-DEC 14 *CALL FOR GROUP RATES

OCOTAL PADI GOLD PALM 5 STAR RESORT

Costa Rica's longest established dive resort. Located on the coast of the North Pacific in Guanacaste, on a calm sandy beach offering good snorkeling, beach activities, & day tours. "One Free Night & One Day Diving Free." 6 night dive pkg. & 4 days diving \$625. PP Save \$120 PP Dbl. Occup. Includes upgrade to Catalina Island dive & 1 night dive, Unlimited Beach dives, daily breakfast & tax. SPECIAL 7 Day Adventure & Dive, Raft, Volcano & Canopy Package, includes breakfast daily \$1132.PP.



COSTA RICA IS OUR BUSINESS!







BRISAS COZUMEL DIVE RESORT & DIVE PARADISE

All-inclusive destination and kid-friendly atmosphere. High-quality beach/dive resort just one mile from downtown and close to the best dive sites. Featuring recently redecorated rooms, a private pier and beach club, and the largest swimming pool on the island. Diving services provided by Dive Paradise Rodale's Readers' Choice Award Winner for Most Popular Dive Operator for 3 years! BULK AIRFARES WITH MAJOR U.S. & CARIBBEAN AIRLINES

Caradonna Caribbean Tours: 1-800-328-2288 or 407-774-9000

E-mail: sales@caradonna.com Website: www.caradonna.com 5 nights/3 days diving - 8 tanks! \$509 7 nights/5 days diving - 14 tanks! \$759



EL CID LA CEIBA & DIVE WITH MARTIN

An island tradition! Come and enjoy our all-ocean-view room resort with spectacular views of the turquoise Caribbean. Features oversized rooms, private balconies, tennis, pools, Jacuzzi, hammocks and the best shore diving in Cozumel. Steel tank services upon request. As members of the Cozumel Country Club, our guests can play the great Nicklaus-designed golf course.

Visit us at www.elcid.com & www.divewithmartin.com

For package information and rates, contact Diving Adventures at 1-800-897-5553

E-mail: elcidcozumel@diving-adventures.com

5 nights/3 days diving \$333 7 nights/5 days diving \$492



ISLAND DREAMS in COZUMEL

YOUR COZUMEL EXPERTS -- We bring you a full range of hotel options from budget to luxury, Cozumel's best dive operators and land touring, plus discount airfares on award-winning Continental Airlines. Call us...Island Dreams is here to serve you.

Island Dreams Tours & Travel Phone: 1-800-346-6116

E-mail: Cozumel@divetrip.com Web: www.Explore-Cozumel.com



OCCIDENTAL GRAND COZUMEL

Located on San Francisco Beach, less than 5 minutes to Palancar Reef on the south side of the island, featuring dive services by Dive Palancar. The newest and most deluxe resort on Cozumel, Occidental Grand Cozumel is a 5 star All Inclusive resort, with 5 restaurants and a Royal Club offering concierge and room-service. Its sister property, Occidental Allegro Cozumel, also offers attractive pricing and an

All Inclusive experience as well.

Occidental Allegro Dive Vacations 1-877-348-3255

Occidental Allegro Dive Vacations 1-877-348-3255
Website: www.divevacations.com & www.grandcozumel.com

5 nights/ 3 days diving from \$819 pp
7 nights/ 5 days diving from \$1077 pp

(Pricing shown is for Occidental Grand Cozumel, based on 2 people)



PLAZA LAS GLORIAS COZUMEL

A deluxe, full-service hotel just 6 blocks south of the downtown square...within easy walking distance of downtown restaurants, nightlife and shopping. Featuring all oceanfront junior suités with living area, in-room refrigerators, a/c, satellite TV, swim-up bar and more! 2003 SPECIAL: 7 nights hotel, 5 morning 2-tank boat dives & 4 afternoon 1-tank boat dives, just \$599/person double occ.

(valid 5/1 - 6/12 and 8/22 - 12/18, holiday restrictions apply). Call toll-free 1-888-599-3483 or visit www.bayadventures.com



VILLABLANCA HOTEL

A small, charming island-style hotel located 1.5 miles south of the downtown square. It's loaded with Mexican flair... colorful tiles and lush landscaping combine to give the Villablanca a romantic garden atmosphere. Amenities include pool, tennis, A/C, in-room refrigerators, satellite TV, telephones and sunken tubs. 2003 SPECIAL: 7 nights hotel, 5 morning 2-tank boat dives & 4 afternoon 1-tank boat dives, just \$469/person double occ. (valid April 16 - Dec 20, holiday restrictions apply. Economy room category; upgrades available.)

Call toll-free 1-888-599-3483

or visit www.bayadventures.com

Seven Reasons to Visit Cozumel







#1 Top Visibility
#1 Top Advanced Diving
#2 Top Dive Destinations
#3 Top Value
#3 Healthiest Marine Environment
#4 Top Wall Diving
#5 Top Underwater Photography

Package prices reflect low season travel dates, blackout dates apply. Contact these partners for details.

Caribbean/Atlantic

INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

Mexican salsa served with tortilla chips—add a little finely chopped pepper and you get mild salsa or throw in a generous amount for a spicy-hot version. That's the diving in Cozumel, and whether you like your diving mild or wild, the world's number one dive destination lets you have it your way: Mild current and shallow nearshore coral gardens for novice divers, swifter current and coral pinnacles near the drop-off for intermediate divers and vertical walls in deep water subject to unpredictable currents for advanced divers.

BEST DIVES Diving is along the leeward southwest shore of the island. There are at least 60 dive operators in Cozumel. Twice a day, an armada of dive boats takes divers for two-tank excursions to reefs on the southern end of the western coast. Some operators also offer one-tank afternoon dives, usually on a shallow reef, that depart about 3 p.m. Ideal for beginners or for the second dive on a two-tank trip are the nearshore reefs like **Yucab**, which is so colorful it stands out like a fruit and vegetable stand in the middle of summer. Sites that line the drop-off include **Santa Rosa Wall**, where the sponges are prolific, including elephant ears bigger than Dumbo's. Advanced? Head to **Punta Sur**. A trip through **Devil's Throat**, the central tunnel through this popular reef, is a rite of passage for all Cozumel divers.

WEATHER Cozumel's average temperature year-round is a balmy 80F, though humidity and bright sunlight can turn up the heat index considerably.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Water temperatures vary from 75F in winter to 85F in summer.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY 100 feet of visibility year-round.

TRAVEL SAVVY With so many operators to choose from, shop around for the best prices.

DESTINATION LINKS The Official Government Guide to Cozumel at www.islacozumel.com.mx.

READER COMMENTS

J.M., Shoreline, Wash.: "I saw massive coral heads and walls during fabulous swim-throughs with 100-foot-plus visibility. I also saw lots of small critters. Cozumel has done a wonderful job in preserving its marine park." J.B., Westfield, N.J.: "The visibility was great, 100-plus feet, and the water temperature was great, too, at a warm 86F. I saw a good amount of coral, lots of small sea life, plus spotted eagle rays and turtles." P.M., Hagerstown, Md.: "This is the easiest location to dive—no headaches and no schlepping lots of gear all over the place." R.T., Frisco, Texas: "The night dives were the best."

Aqua Safari (011) 52-987-87-20101
web: www.aquasafari.com ■ 37-year operation. We take personal care of our divers.
package: 5 nights at Safari Inn, 3 days of twotank boat dives, 2 afternoon dives, taxes, \$277
p.p., dbl. occ.

Cozumel Sports (011) 52-987-87-

26726 web: www.cozumelsports.com

Personalized attention, safety, private services
and special tours. Visit our guestbook to look
for divers' comments. package: Hotel and dive
package starting at \$60 per day, dbl. occ.,
including two-tank dive daily, taxes and marine
park fees.



COZUMEI

TERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

Del Mar Aquatics/Dive Palancar

(011) 52-987-87-21900, ext. 630 web: www.del maraquatics.net We are an Instructor Development Center. We care about safety and

DIMI & Scuba Tours (011) 52-987-22915 web: www.dimiscubatours.com Personalized attention, no rush, laid-back atmosphere, direct contact with management and owners, long bottom times, no crowds. package: 7 days accommodations with pool, 5 two-tank dives, continental breakfast, lunch and beverage, \$495 p.p., dbl. occ.

Dive Cozumel (888) 366-8708, (011) 52-987-87-24567 web: www.divecozumel.net Our boat is a 48-foot custom dive boat. It's big. fast and comfortable. Freshwater rinse and towels provided onboard. We dive all the reefs in Cozumel. Our dives average one hour in length. Larger tanks available for those who need them. Technical diving instruction available. package: 7 days lodging, \$710 p.p., single or dbl. occ.

872-1953 web: www.divehouse.com Full selection of dive tours and instruction, equipment rental, sales and service, scuba boutique, gear-washing facilities and lockers. Divers grouped on boats according to experience level. We have facilities to accommodate groups of all sizes.

Dive Palancar (011) 52-987-87-29770 web: www.divepalancarcozumel.com Dive Palancar is a full-service facility specializing in diving and other watersports. We are located at Occidental Allegro Cozumel and Occidental Grand Cozumel. package: Check our web site for packages.

Dive Paradise Cozumel (800) 308-5125, (011) 52-987-872-1007 web: www.diveparadise.com Voted world's most popular dive operator for three consecutive years in Rodale's "Top 100" Readers' Choice Awards. We have been providing safe, reliable and fun-filled scuba diving and dive training in Cozumel for more than 19 years. We have a top-notch staff of 95 professionals to serve you, five full-service locations (including our newest beach location at Brisas Cozumel Resort) and the largest fleet of boats on the island (12). Customized, flexible, safe diving and dive training. Cozumel's largest independent dive operator, our motto is "The Name You Know and Trust." package: Wide variety of accommodations and dive packages available in all price ranges starting from \$298 p.p. Allinclusive option and children's program available at our newest beach location, Brisas Cozumel, Ask about our SEAL TEAM program. Please e-mail or call for details.

Dive With Martin/Diving Adventures (800) 897-5553, (011) 52-987-87-22610 web: www.divewithmartin. com, www. cozumelkingdiver.com package: Three-tank boat dives, \$60. Multiple days, includes free rental gear, night dive, shore diving and underwater video.

Diving Adventures (888) 338-0388, (011) 52-987-22519 web: www.divingadven tures.net Personalized service. Fun, safe dive instruction services since 1989. Lots of experience, personal attention, relaxed atmosphere and schedule flexibility. package: Barracuda Hotel and Diving Adventures offer packages including 4 days, 3 nights accommodations, 2 days of two-tank dives, afternoon one-tank dive, unlimited beach diving and airport-hotel transfers, starting at \$225 p.p.

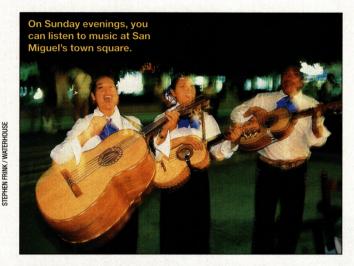
Iberostar Cozumel / Dressel **Divers** (011) 34-96-356-1496 web: www.dresseldivers.com Offer a 15 percent discount for pre-payments via our sales department. package: Gorilla Package-4 to 5 days with one excursion to Riviera Maya with 2 cenote dives, a night dive in Cozumel, 8 single reef dives in Cozumel, includes transfers, food, beverages and guide on the excursion, \$499 p.p.

Living Underwater (859) 356-5647 web: www.living-underwater.com We offer longer bottom times with the use of our new steel tanks, and a maximum of 6 to 8 divers per boat, grouped according to ability. We do advanced sites for advanced divers and begin-





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ner sites for those just starting to dive. On the boat we offer complimentary soda, water, cookies, fruit, fresh towels and warm parkas if needed. We pick up at most docks south of town. Rinse, store and set up gear daily. We try to give the ultimate dive experience with safety being the number-one concern.

Prestaciones Submarinas (011)

52-987-869-0554 web: www.psubmarinas.
com ■ NAUI Pro Platinum Dive Center, NAUI
Nitrox Center, DAN Business Member and
Partners in Dive Safety and the only ASHI
Training Center in Mexico. We offer courses
from scuba diver up to instructor trainer for

NAUI and instructor for DAN and ASHI. Equipment rental. Free dive gear rinsing and storage every day. We do it all for you. Underwater video and photo services are available upon request. The company is attended by the owners exclusively. High quality and safety are our main concerns. package: 7-day package including 7 nights in very nice, private apartments, plus 5 two-tank dive trips, \$470 p.p., dbl. occ. Meals are not included.

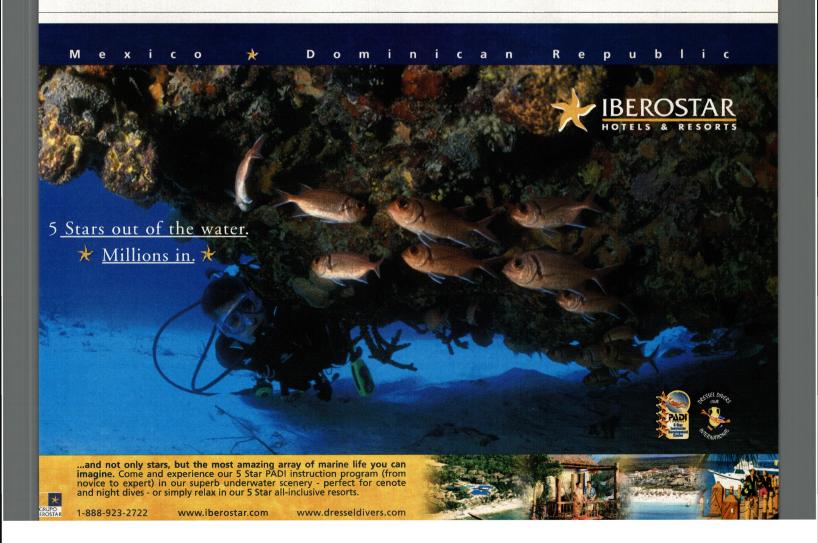
Sand Dollar Sports (888) 737-6399, (011) 52-987-87-26157 web: www.sanddol larsports.com ■ Our dive operation is located 10 to 20 minutes from all the reefs. No long boat rides. package: 5 days of diving with a night dive, \$300; 6 days of diving with a night dive, \$330.

Scuba Club Cozume! (800) 847-5708, (011) 52-987-87-21133 web: www.scubaclubcozumel.com ■ Attention to detail and pride in a job well done sets us apart from the others. Our staff is there to make sure you enjoy a safe, hassle-free vacation. pack-

age: 7-night dive package includes 7 nights, 3 meals per day, 5 days of boat diving, unlimited beach diving, \$795 p.p., dbl. occ.

Scuba-Du (011) 52-987-87-29505 web: www.scubadu.com ■ Personal attention and small groups set us apart. We group divers by experience and offer private trips. package: 5 nights, 4 days of two-tank boat dives, daily breakfast, unlimited beach diving, welcome drink, 25 percent off boat night dive, \$778.99 p.p., dbl. occ.

Sea Scuba (888) 338-0387, (011) 52-987-87-25744 web: www.cozumel.diving.net/ seascuba/ We take divers everywhere you want to dive, south or north, and give you the freedom of continuing your dive even after other divers have surfaced. We offer longer surface times and bottom times (about 60 minutes for each dive). Fast boat carries 7 divers max. package: Dive package is \$295 per diver for 12 one-tank boat dives; \$160 per diver for 7 tanks (4 divers minimum). Marine park fee is not included.



CURACAO TIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

CURAÇÃO If you've been considering a dive trip to Aruba for its wreck diving or Bonaire for its shore diving, you might want to read between the lines—Curação, which offers a little bit of both of its Dutch neighbors. Like Bonaire, the dive drill is as simple as pulling the rental truck over, slapping on a tank and wading in. And like Aruba, Curação has a couple of great wreck dives, and offers a well-developed tourism infrastructure, including good hotels, restaurants, casinos and shopping. Generally speaking, the better shore diving is in the north and the better boat diving is in the south. The island's shore sites are marked with numbered white stones, similar to Bonaire's yellow ones. If you'd prefer to let the boat crews schlep your tanks,

opt for a dive package through vour resort.

BEST DIVES Mushroom Forest is a surreal field of mountainous star coral heads that have been eroded at their bases, making them look like enormous shiitakes. Arguably the most pristine site, Klein Curação is a dramatic (and rare) wall dive an hour south of the main island that boasts snappers, turtles and tons of tropicals. The Superior Producer is Curação's biggest and best wreck, sitting in 50 to 110 feet of water and festooned with orange cup corals and the full spectrum of encrusting sponges.

WEATHER Summer temps aver-

age 85F and drop to about 75F in winter. AVERAGE WATER TEMP Low to mid-80Fs in summer, mid- to

high 70Fs in winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Ranges from 50 to 100 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY The island boasts the best air connections in the southern Caribbean, so getting here and back home again is no problem.

DESTINATION LINKS Curação Tourism Development Bureau at www.curacao-tourism.com.

READER COMMENTS

L.V., BERWYN, PA.: "The reef was very healthy and vibrant. There was no current and unlimited visibility. I didn't feel the need to go deeper than 50 feet." R.B., MUSCATINE, IOWA: "The island was great. There were nice land activities to complement the diving." R.J., Bedminster, N.J.: "The people, weather and diving were fantastic." J.H., RANSOMVILLE, N.Y.: "I liked how this location was easy to get to, had a variety of restaurants, abundant small fish and good water visibility." R.K., N. CANTON, OHIO: "I liked the great reef diving and the short boat rides to get to the sites."

Caribbean Sea Sports (011) 5999-462-2620 web: www.caribseasports.com

Habitat Curação (800) 327-6709 web: www.habitatdiveresorts.com Secluded, private resort located on southwest coast. PADI 5-star and Instructor Development Center and TDI Training Facility. Boat dives daily and 24hour unlimited shore diving all year. package: Dive & Drive 7-night package includes accommodations, airport transfers, 6 boat dives, 24hour unlimited shore diving, free air refills, tanks, weights, belt, daily buffet breakfast, welOcean Encounters (011) 5999-461-

8131 web: www.oceanencounters.com Qualified staff at all levels, from divernasters to instructors. IDC programs three times a year; all specialties available. Two locations in the best diving spot of Curação-at the Curação Seaquarium between Lions Dive Hotel and Seaguarium Royal Resort and at Breezes SuperClubs, package: Get certified as an open-water diver and dive for free up to 7 days for the rest of your stay.

Seascape N.V. (800) 992-2015, (011)



come cocktail, rum punch party, government taxes, service charges, gratuities and shared vehicle rental (taxes, insurance and surcharges not included), from \$953 p.p., dbl. occ. (from \$790 p.p., quad. occ.).

Holiday Beach Dive Center (888) 322-DIVE, (011) 5999 462-8878 web: www.holidaybeachdivecenter.com Walking distance to town with private palm beach. package: 7 nights, 6 days of two-tank boat dives, breakfast, taxes, service charges, transfers and roud-trip air from Miami, \$999 p.p.

Kids Sea Camp (800) 934-3483, (954) 236-6611 web: www.kidseacamp.com Family-friendly vacations that are fun and safe. Educational programs for kids ages 4 to 15. package: 7 nights ocean-view room, diving, camp, some meals, transfers and tax, from \$425 per child and \$925 per adult.

5999-4625905 web: www.seascapecura cao.com 37 years of experience, we're your dive shop with personality. package: 3 nights, 4 dives, breakfast, taxes, surcharges, welcome cocktail upon arrival, belt and weights, unlimited use of tank with free airfills for shore diving, from \$591 p.p., sgl. occ.; \$387 p.p., dbl. occ.

Sunset Waters Beach Resort/Sunset Divers (866) 5-

SUNSET web: www.sunsetwaters.com We provide easy access to the premier dive locations on the island. All-inclusive beach and dive resort, featuring all meals, drinks, entertainment, full-service dive shop and oceanfront rooms.

If you think the

VIEW FROM BELOW

is breathtaking, wait until you see the VIEW FROM ABOVE.



After diving in warm turquoise water. After snorkeling among exotic fish. After beach hopping. After 18 holes of golf. After strolling through our museums. After the boutiques. After your Indonesian meal. After doing the Mambo. After hitting the casinos. After it all, you'll ask yourself why you've never come here before. For more information and a complementary dive video, call 1-800-3-CURACAO (328-7222).

Air service by American Airlines and Dutch Caribbean Airlines daily from Miami, Air Jamaica five times a week from 12 U.S. gateway cities, and Delta Air Lines flights from Atlanta.



www.curacao-tourism.com

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Columbus is credited with discovering the island of Hispaniola, home to the country we know as the Dominican Republic, but it's American divers who are leading a new era of exploration in the DR. Lured by easy access and bargain prices at some sweet all-inclusive resorts, U.S. divers are increasingly exploring the second largest island in the Caribbean. Almost anywhere you dive in the DR, you can expect shallow- to medium-depth reefs and wreck dives. The best water conditions are found off Boca Chica, Juan Dolio, Bayahibe, the Samaná Peninsula and Playa Dorada/Sosua.

BEST DIVES Boca Chica. Two great wrecks lie almost side by side in just 60 feet of water—the Hickory a 140-foot salvage vessel, and El Limon, a 75-foot-long tugboat.

Juan Dolio. Try the Tanya V, a 120-foot cargo ship sunk off the Coral Costa Caribe Resort.

Bayahibe. Catalina Wall, from the coral plateau at 15 feet to the depths of the wall at 130, may be the best dive in the entire DR.

Samaná. Pinnacle dives don't get prettier than The Tower, a 130-foot-deep coral skyscraper.

WEATHER Summer temps range from 89F to 95F with winter temps ranging from 75F to 85F. August is the hottest month and January the coolest.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP 84F in summer to 77F in winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Expect 60 to 75 feet on sites near shore, with vis improving the farther you travel offshore.

TRAVEL SAVVY There are several international airports in the DR. For the Boca Chica and Juan Dolio regions, fly into Las Americas International Airport just outside Santo Domingo. If you plan to visit Puerto Plata, fly into International Gregorio Luperon Airport. Staying in the Bayahibe region? Fly into La Romana International Airport. For U.S. citizens, a valid passport or original birth certificate and picture ID are required. The official language is Spanish, but English is widely spoken in the resorts and tourist areas. The dive staff is very likely to be multilingual thanks to the heavy European visitation.

DESTINATION LINKS Dominican Republic **Tourism** ww.dominicana.com.do.

READER COMMENTS

R.P., Sergeantsville, N.J.: "A pod of dolphins swam with the boat for a while. I found a good-sized octopus and was surprised he was out during the day." R.W., San Antonio, Texas: "We love the Dominican Republic. We go at least once a year. It is a very proud and friendly country. The people are great." J.M., GARDNERVILLE, Nev.: "We experienced warm water, 85-foot visibility and great reefs away from the population centers."



From the editors of Rodale's Scuba Diving and www.scubadiving.com, Depth-Finder is a FREE monthly e-newsletter written by divers, for divers. Go to www.scubadiving.com and click on Depth-Finder to subscribe today!

(866) 882-4723, (212) 473-4569 web: www.circewatersports.com ■ Circe is dedicated to the diving pleasure of our clients, and rarely pre-schedules excursions, preferring to accommodate guests' individual requests. Safety is a major concern, and equipment is well-maintained; oxygen, radios and cell phones are always available. package: Twotank dive excursion to Catalina Island, including a dive at the Wall and the Aquarium reefs, lunch and transfers. Check web site for latest prices.

Coral Canoa Beach Hotel & Spa and Sea Pro Divers (800) 288-1332, (305) 451-0242 web: www.waterhouse tours.com Bayahibe is the very best scuba diving in the Dominican Republic. Coral Hotels is part of the Hilton chain. Coral Canoa features four restaurants, four bars, massive swimming pool, internet room, nightly entertainment, horseback riding, all located along the calm leeside Caribbean coast. package: 7

nights, 6 days of all-inclusive accommodations, two dives per day for 5 days, including tanks and weights. Package also includes alcoholic drinks, snacks, all taxes and service charges, \$825 p.p.

Coral Costa Caribe Beach Hotel & Casino / Sea Pro Diver (800) 288-1332, (305) 451-0242 web: www.water housetours.com package: Visit www.water housetours.com or call for seasonal specials.

Coral Hamaca Beach Hotel & Casino / Sea Pro Divers (800) 288-1332, (305) 451-0242 web: www.waterhouse tours.com package: Visit www.waterhouse tours.com or call for seasonal packages.

Iberostar / Dressel Divers (011)
34-96-3561496 web: dresseldivers.com package: Gorilla package—4 to 5 days with two-tank dive excursions to Saona Island, Catalina Island and Bayahibe, 5 reef dives in Playa Bavoro and includes transfers, food, beverages and guide, \$499 p.p.

Neptuno Dive Center (809) 526-

2005 web: www.neptunodive.com The Neptuno Dive Center was the first PADI IDC center on the south coast of the Dominican Republic and is now one of the biggest dive operations in the country. We're located in Juan Dolio and Bavaro. package: 7 nights in

the 4-star hotel Colonia Tropical, 10 dives, \$502 p.p., dbl. occ.

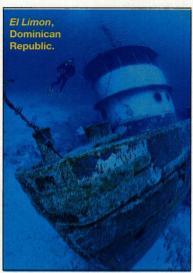
Samana Scuba Diving Center (800) 550-1869, (954) 462-3400 web: www.nealwatson.com All-inclusive fun. Whale-watching available. package: 7 nights all-inclusive accommodations, 10 dives, airport transfers from Puerto Plata or Santo Domingo, \$996 p.p., dbl. occ.

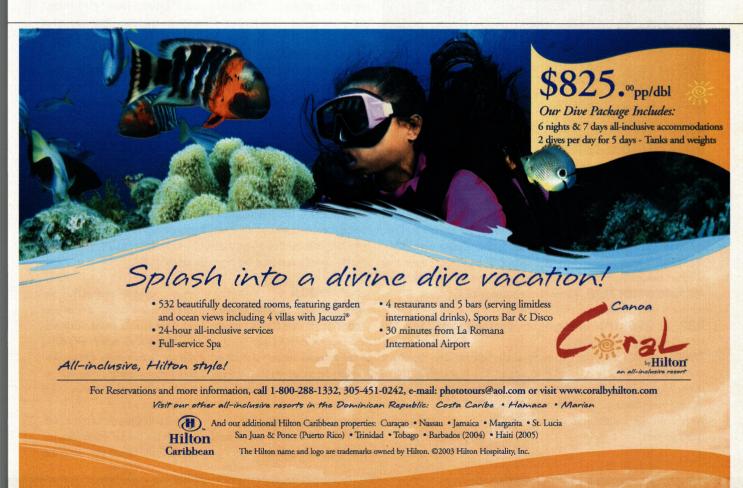
Scubacaribe (809) 552 1435
web: www.scubacaribe.com PADI
5-star Gold Palm Resort, friendly
staff, good service and quality.
Excursions to Bayahibe and Catalina.
package: One dive in Punta Cana.

two dives in Catalina and two dives in Bayahibe. **Sea Pro Divers** (809) 320-2607 web:

www.seanrodivers.com

Treasure Divers (800) 820-1631, (809) 523-5320 web: www.treasuredivers.de
Nitrox and rebreather service available.



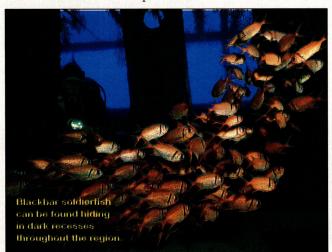


EASTERN CARIBBEAN Stretched

out in a ragged arc, the islands of the Lesser Antilles hem in the Caribbean's eastern frontier against the Atlantic. The most popular dive destinations in the region, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saba, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, offer completely different diving experiences.

Although some of the islands are better known in sailing and beach-going circles than in the dive community, all can deliver a week of excitement-filled recreational diving, whether your love is macro photography, shore diving or drift diving.

BEST DIVES Most diving on Dominica takes place off the island's southwestern corner between Roseau and Scotts Head, the lip of a sunken volcano. Grenada's Bianca C is one of the largest wreck dives in the Caribbean while the 360-foot Stavronikita on Barbados is one of the most impressive. St. Lucia's diving is focused on shore diving shallow reefs and drift diving deep walls within the island's marine park on the west-central side of the



island. In addition to some nice sloping walls, St. Vincent has its fair share of rare critters, including seahorses and frogfish, and enough macro subjects to keep photographers plenty busy. Saba, the world's first self-sustaining marine park, is basically one big open-ocean pinnacle that offers the possibility of seeing blacktip, whitetip and bull sharks, spotted eagle rays and hammerheads.

WEATHER Temperatures vary between 70F and 90F, depending on the season. Tropical showers are not uncommon year-round. AVERAGE WATER TEMP Water temperatures range from 77F in winter to 83F in summer.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Visibility varies anywhere from 25 to 150 feet depending on the site.

TRAVEL SAVVY Plan your trip early as the lowest fares require a purchase at least 21 days prior to departure. If possible, try to stay on one airline because it's usually cheaper and there is less chance your luggage will be lost or delayed. Watch your baggage weight on the puddle jumpers between islands to avoid excess baggage fees.

DESTINATION LINKS Visit the tourism bureaus for the islands on the web: Dominica at www.dominica.dm, Grenada at www.grenadagrenadines.com, Saba at www.sabatourism.com, St. Lucia at www.stlucia.org, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines at www.svgtourism.com or www.scubasvg.com.

READER COMMENTS

BARBADOS A.S., ELKHART, IND.: "I liked the variety of fish life, but it would have been nice to see larger fish." K.H., Guys Mills, Pa.: "There were lots of beautiful yellow coral formations. The mast and deck of the Stavronikita were at 20 to 60 feet. The prop at 130 feet allowed for 30 to 40 minutes of time, related to depth." B.C., PAWLING, N.Y.: "We were pleasantly surprised to encounter seahorses on occasion, even while snorkeling five feet from shore. Snorkeling with an abundance of hawksbill sea turtles was spectacular."

DOMINICA C.D., CINCINNATI, OHIO: "I loved the health of the reefs and the awesome wall diving." J.G., Las Vegas, Nev.: "The diving was beautiful. There was lots of small stuff like frogfish, seahorses, eels and octopus-just to name a few." J.B., New Bern, N.C.: "I got some of the best macro photography ever. I liked the short trips to the sites and the easy diving." R.E., WEEHAWKEN, N.J.: "I saw fantastic marine life. I even saw several seldom-seen fish. I loved the deep and shallow dive variety!"

GRENADA S.I., RALEIGH, N.C.: "I went on great topside eco-tours into a rain forest with spectacular waterfalls. The food was very good at multiple restaurants, but a bit pricey." R.C., EL PASO, TEXAS: "Beautiful island, good prices." S.K., RALEIGH, N.C.: "The health of the reefs was incredible. They were full of life."

SABA E.G., PLANO, TEXAS: "There's an excellent diversity of creatures, coral formations and dive profiles." T.M., GOLDEN, COLO.: "The environment is in great shape with lots of sea life. There are some tough currents."

ST. LUCIA P.R., CHICAGO, ILL.: "Phenomenal sea life, very warm water and great rates. The ocean floor drops off at a steep angle to 6,000 feet, so good buoyancy control and paying attention to the divernaster is important. The currents are light and even a beginner can have a good time." D.F., LARGO, FLA.: "You must dive with a diversater, whether it's a shore dive or not. ... I saw a variety of marine life, but it's not as abundant as other places I've been. Drift dives were new to us and

ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES J.K., RUSSELLVILLE, KY.: "You won't see big fish, but you will see hundreds of fish, including many new species. I added 19 new species to my life list here. Usually it's a thrill to find just one. The reefs are healthy, visibility was good and the water was 80F to 82F."

DOMINICA

Dive Dominica / Castle Comfort Lodge (888) 414-7626, (767) 448-2188 web: www.castlecomfortdivelodge.com

Professional service, qualified trained staff and four boats that can cater to groups and individual divers. We have trained guides and captains who use operational procedures approved by the International Fund For Animal Welfare for our whale and dolphin tours. package: 7 nights accommodations, 7 breakfasts, 10 boat dives,

unlimited shore dives, airport transfers, welcome rum punch upon arrival, taxes and gratuties. Kayaks and nitrox available. Special summer rates available only on the 7-night packages, \$699 p.p., vacationer sharing, \$499, and single diver, \$950. May through October 2003, not available for the month of September (both operations are closed).

East Carib Dive (767) 449-65-75 web: www.east-carib-dive.com On the beach. Very quiet, small operation with a very friendly staff.

Nature Island Dive (767) 449-8181 web: www.natureis landdive.dm Professional, personalized and friendly service. package: 7 nights accommodations, 10 dives, night dive, unlimited sea kayaking, mountain biking and government tax, \$820 p.p., dbl. occ.

SABA

Saba Divers & Scout's Place Hotel (011) 599-41-62740 web: www.sabadivers.com | The unique all-in-oneresort on Saba. Professional dive center, quaint Saban-styled hotel, bar and restaurant, divers' boutique, maintenance area and two uncrowded dive boats. Patio, terrace, pool and great oceanview from all rooms and terraces. package: 5 nights and 8 dives includes taxes, transfer to and from hoat, tank, weights, hoat trip and breakfast, \$475 p.p. Check our web site for specials.

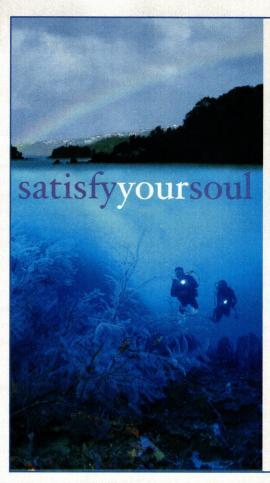
ST. LUCIA

St. Lucia Undersea Adventures (800) 327-8150, (954) 462-3400 web: www.nealwatson.com Shore diving available and trips to a marine reserve. package: 7 nights hotel accommodations, 10 boat dives, airport transfers, room taxes and service charges, tanks, weights and belts, \$952 p.p., dbl. occ. The BodyHoliday at LeSPORT (800) 544-2883, (758) 457-7800 web: www.thebodyholiday.com This Caribbean resort located on St. Lucia offers you an impressive arsenal of all-inclusive pursuits in a luxurious first-class beach environment. Included in the price of your dive holiday is a schedule of inclusive spa treatments, as well as classes in Pilates, stretching, yoga, Tai Chi and meditation. package: Certified Diver Packages-5-night package includes all equipment, wetsuit rental, 3 two-tank boat dives, service charge and government tax, T-shirt and VHS/DVD of your dive, \$1,500 p.p. from May 18 to Nov. 1, 2003. Check web site for additional packages.

ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

Bequia Dive Adventures (784) 458-3826 web: www.BeguiaDiveAdventures.com Beguia Dive Adventures specializes in personal service. Small group diving with the emphasis on you. We offer 11 dive specialty courses as well as Discover Scuba through assistant instructor courses. Our owner and staff have years of experience supplying some of the best diving in the Caribbean at very competitive prices. All our dive staff are certified PADI Assistant Instructors or higher. package: 9 nights accommodations at the Village Apartments, 12 boat dives, from \$534 p.p., quad. occ.; \$590 p.p., dbl. occ. Beginning May 1, 2003, 14 nights at Bequia Beach Club, 6 days of two-tank diving with Bequia Dive Adventures, breakfast daily and airport taxi transfers, \$646 p.p., dbl. occ.

Dive Bequia (877) 685-0944, (784) 458-3504 web: www.dive-bequia.com Five full-time staff members made up of divernasters and instructors. Combined staff diving experience is



ome to one of the Caribbean's most unspoilt island groups offering spectacular landscapes, beautiful beaches and turquoise blue waters. We offer a diverse range of activities to suit every holidaymaker's desire.

Diving...

The tropical seas that surround St. Vincent & the Grenadines offer a world of marine adventure. Whether you're skimming on the surface on a windsurfer or sunfishing or gliding below through shoals of fish and colourful corals, this is one of the Caribbean's most beautiful marine environments. Swim, dive or snorkel...satisfy your soul



St. Vincent 8 the Grenadines

St. Vincent & the Grenadines Ministry of Tourism, Kingstown, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, West Indies. Tel: (784) 457-2425 email: tourism@caribsurf.com UK: Tel 44 0207-937-6570 email: svgtourismeurope@aol.com USA: Tel: 1 800 729-1726 email: svgtony@aol.com CANADA: Tel (416) 398-4277 www.svgtourism.com





GRAND VIEW BEACH HOTEL
Located at Villa Point on the south coast of St. Vincent, in the path of cooling tradewinds is set in eight acres of tropical gardens with commanding views of the Grenadine Islands.

1-800-742-4276 www.grandviewhotel.com grandview@caribsurf.com

SUNSET SHORES BEACH HOTEL Idyllically located on the best beach in St. Vincent. Surrounded by three acres of lush tropical gardens, this friendly, family-owned hotel has 32 tastefully furnished rooms all with patio view of the ocean.

1-800-223-6510 www.sunsetshore.com sunshore@caribsurf.com





VILLA LODGE HOTEL
Sitting above the beautiful waters of Indian Bay, just minutes away from town, entertainment and dive shops, we offer stylish rooms, self-contained apartments, an affordable restaurant and a freshwater pool to satisfy your every need.

> 784-458-4641 frontdesk@villalodge.com www.villalodge.com



66 years. We have two custom-built dive boats to separate beginners from experienced divers. package: 9 nights accommodations, tax and 12 boat dives, \$530 p.p., dbl. occ., May 1 to Oct. 31, 2003. Dive Fantasea (784) 457-5560 web: www.divefanta sea.com Dive Fantasea is a friendly local dive operation priding itself on personalized service and quality instruction. We cater to both groups and individuals. We operate daily dive trips with both one and two-tank dives led by experienced professionals with a trained eye for pointing out all the underwater critters you've come to see. package: Multiple packages available to best suit your dive vacation and holiday desires. Please visit our web site for the most up-to-date packages available.

Dive St. Vincent (800) 544-7361, (784) 457-4928 web: www.DiveStVincent.com We specialize in marine life identification and underwater photography tours. See our web site for more information. package: Mariners Hotel 2002 Grand Opening Special-7 nights accommodations, 12 dives, all equipment

including computers, full breakfast daily, air-conditioning, airport transfer, waterfront, gear washing and storage, 17 percent government tax and hotel service charge, \$850 p.p., dbl. occ. Bring six divers and get your own boat and dive crew. Valid for 2003. Friendship Divers (784) 455-3036 web: www.friend

shipdivers.com

Granadines Dive (784) 458-8138 web: www.Grenadines Dive.com

Petit Byahaut (784) 457-7008 web: www.petitbya haut.com Petit Byahaut is a 50-acre valley situated on a jewel of a bay. We are a nature resort with sea-only access. Excellent snorkeling and diving in the bay or at varied sites up and down the dramatic leeward coast. package: 5 nights accommodations, all meals, snorkeling, scuba diving, sunfish, hikes, nature trails, \$1,950 p.p., dbl. occ.; \$1,500 p.p., single occ. Extra nights, \$390 and \$300, based on occupancy.

The tropical South Seas paradise of Fiji has long been known as the "soft coral capital of the world." But there is more to the underwater story here. From salt cays to volcanic atolls, the nutrient-rich waters of the fringing reefs and lagoons support tremendous biodiversity and plenty of hard corals. Divers rave about the quality of the reefs around these 320-plus islands, but the experience differs depending on which island you dive. Remember to imbibe a little kava, a ceremonial drink offered in friendship to visitors. BEST DIVES When diving in Fiji, expect an astounding amount of marine life including over 400 species of invertebrates and incredible visibility. Somosomo Strait's Great White Wall offers the best opportunity for a lush soft coral wall dive. Spectacular offshore dive sites between Viti Levu and Vanua Levu like Magic Mountain and E-6 are serviced by live-aboards and are favorites of underwater photographers. Diving through the currents of channels like Nigali Passage and North Save-a-Tack Passage can bring the rewards of schooling fish and pelagic predators.

WEATHER Temperatures stay in the low 80Fs most of the year and dip to about 75F from May to October. The best conditions are found from March to December when the weather is cooler and drier than it is in January and February.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Anywhere from the mid-70Fs in cool months (May to October) to the mid-80Fs in January and February.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Excellent—in the triple digits most of the year, although plankton blooms and rainfall can lower the vis during the rainy season from December through

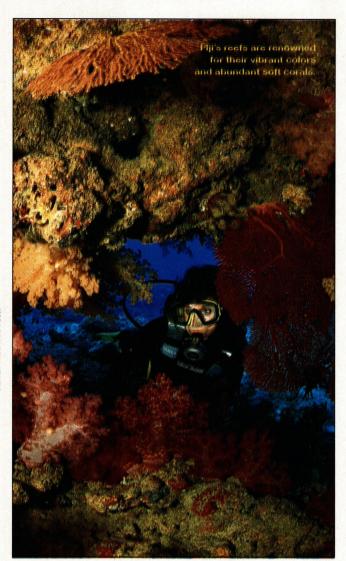
TRAVEL SAVVY You'll need a passport and a return ticket to get into Fiji, plus there's a departure tax of FJ\$20 when you leave.

DESTINATION LINKS The Fiji Visitors Bureau at www.fijifvb.gov.fj.

READER COMMENTS

R.S., Rio Rancho, N.M.: "I liked seeing the different species of marine life that you do not get to see in the Caribbean, as well as the colors of the soft corals. The abundance of fish life was wonderful." M.B., WINDSOR, CALIF.: "The soft coral gardens are still the best anywhere in the world. It seems I can never take enough photos." C.T., Memphis, Tenn.: "We dove in Bega Lagoon, and the soft corals were unreal."

Caribbean



BEQA ISLAND AND PACIFIC HARBOR

Aqua-Trek Beqa / Centra Resort Pacific Harbour (800) 541-4334, (415) 398-8990 web: www.aquatrek.com World-famous Aqua-Trek 3D shark expedition. Divers can experience up to eight species of sharks on one dive, including bulls, tigers, oceanic whitetips and hammerheads.

Beqa Divers Fiji (011) 679-3361088
web: www.beqadivers.com Fiji's first and
most experienced dive operator. Established in
1970. Great diving within reasonable proximity
to Suva, Fiji's capital. package: 7 nights in private villa-type accommodations at Pacific
Harbour, 5 days diving with picnic lunch included, includes round-trip Nadi to Pacific Harbour

transfers, \$590 p.p.

Mariin Bay Rasort (800) 542-3454, (949) 646-8091 web: www.marlinbay.com ■ Best value, top-rated staff, world-class diving, new shark dive, 5-star dining, deluxe Fijianstyle bures. package: 7-night all-inclusive dive package, \$2,249 p.p.

KADAVU

Dive Kadavu Resort (011) 6793311780 web: www.divekadavu.com • We offer the premier beach resort and dive operation on Kadavu, Ono and the Great Astrolabe. Our dive boats are fully outfitted for divers. package: Matana Special—7 nights, 10 dives, transfers on Kadavu, all meals, complimentary use of all nonmotorized watersports. Check

web site or call for updated price.

LAU GROUP

Kalmbu Island Resort (800) 473-0332, (011) 679-8880333 web: www.Kalmbu Fiii.com

MATANGI ISLAND

Matangi Dive Resort/Tropical Dive (866) FIJI-DIVE, (011) 679-8880776 web: www.MatangiDive.com Matangi is a beautiful, private island with 14 private bungalows. package: 7 nights in oceanfront bure, 4 dive days, meals, snacks, most activities, interisland air on Sun Air, \$1,299 p.p., twin share.

NAMENALALA

Moody's Namena (011) 679-8813764
web: www.moodysnamenafiji.com ■ Nestled
within the Namena barrier reef, just minutes
away from some of Fiji's best sites. package: 7
nights in a secluded bure, pay for only 6 nights
with 5 dive days, all meals, activities and tax,
plus 5 two-tank boat dives on the Namena barrier reef, \$1,669 p.p., twin share. Nondivers,
\$1,194. Valid May 1 through October 2003.

NANANU-I-RA

Crystal Divers Fiji (866) 883-3373, (011) 679-669-4747 web: www.crystal divers.com Live-aboard-quality diving from a land-based operator. Sites are eight to 20 miles offshore, custom-designed dive boat, separate divermasters for advanced divers. package: 6 nights bure accommodations at Wananavu Beach Resort, 5 two-tank dive days, all meals, transfers to and from Nadi, \$999 p.p., dbl. occ.

Ra Divers Fiji (011) 679-6694511 web: www.radivers.com Operating in this area for 10 years. We offer full range of dive instruction. Packages include 7 nights accommodations, all transfers, meals, 5 days of diving, weights, belts, tanks and dive guide. From full resort facilities to self-contained beach cottages. All dives are boat dives on the outer reef.

TAVEUNI

Aqua-Trek Taveuni / Gardan Island Resort (800) 541-4334, (415) 398-8990 web: www.aquatrek.com Garden

Island Resort and Aqua-Trek Taveuni received several *Rodale's Scuba Diving's* 2003 "Top 100" Readers' Choice Awards. Contact Aqua-Trek for package information.

SONAISALI ISLAND

Dive Sonaisali (011) 679-706011 web:

VANUA LEVU

Jean-Michel Cousteau

islands Resort (800) 246-3454, (415) 788-5794 web: www.fijiresort.com Dive operation is overseen by the son of Jacques Cousteau. Features personalized service, storage lockers and a state-of-the-art dive boat. package: 8 days, 7 nights in a garden-view bure, breakfast, lunch and dinner daily, 5 days of two-tank dives, \$2,047.50 p.p., dbl. occ., plus 12.5 percent.

Koro Sun Resort - Fiji Islands / L'Aventure Jean-Michel Cousteau Diving (877) 567-6786, (970) 626-5170 web: www.korosunresort.com We're the cutting edge in diving. Marine biologists on staff. package: 7 days accommodations, 5 two-tank dives, meals, nonmotorized sports, \$1,298 p.p., dbl. occ.

VITI LEVU

AquaBlue (Fiji) / AquariusDive-Fiji (011) 679-672-6010 web: www.

AquariusDive-Fiji.com, www.FijiScuba.com New gear, new dive boat, great inexpensive property on the beach just 10 minutes from Nadi international airport. package: 7 nights in ocean-front room, 5 dive days, US\$420 p.p., dbl. occ.

Waldroke Bay Dive Resort (011) 679-3304605 web: www.dive-surf-fiji.com.fj Located close to Beqa Passage and Beqa Lagoon. Divers get to spend their time diving, not traveling in a boat. package: 7-night deluxe oceanfront bure, meals and 8 dives, \$575 p.p., dbl. occ.

YASAWA ISLANDS

Yasawa Island Resort (011) 679-6722 266 web: www.yasawa.com ■ The only dive operation in the Northern Yasawa Islands offering high-quality, personalized dive experiences and many new sites. We offer custom packages.

FLORIDA KE

TERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

FLORIDA KEYS When you've just gotta go diving, nothing delivers convenience like the Florida Keys. Get in the car, point it south and take the Overseas Highway, a 112mile stretch of two-lane across 200 islands, from Key Largo to Key West. More than 50 operators offer daily trips to the coralrich waters of the 2,800-square-nautical-mile Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

BEST DIVES Take your pick for wreck diving in the Keys: the Aldolphus Busch Sr., Duane, Bibb, Eagle, Thunderbolt, Cannabis Cruiser and Cayman Salvor. Not to be missed is the 510-foot-long Spiegel Grove, the largest ship ever to be sunk as an artificial reef. The best reef diving is found in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary at sites like Alligator Reef, Conch Reef, Davis Reef and Molasses Reef, and in Pennekamp State Park, home of the popular Christ of the Abyss statue. The Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary offers good snorkeling and shallow reef diving.

WEATHER Temperatures are mild year-round with hot, humid summers and mid-winter temperatures bottoming out in the 50Fs and 60Fs.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Low 80Fs to high 70Fs in summer. Low 70Fs in winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Typically averages 40 to 75 feet, with 100 feet on calm days, but wind and waves can reduce visibility dra-

Fish in the Keys enjoy the protection of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

matically.

TRAVEL SAVVY If you're not driving down in your own car, consider flying into Miami and renting a car for your trip. When diving the Grove, expect to purchase a \$10 medallion in support of artificial reefs.

DESTINATION LINKS Florida Keys tourism web site at www.flakeys.com.

READER COMMENTS

ISLAMORADA/TAVERNIER L.J., MILLTOWN, MICH.: "The sites we dove were healthy with reef life. Wrecks were in good condition with interesting histories. There are a variety of dive locales to fit any diver's experience level and lots of good restaurants, shopping, accommodations and night life. It's easy to get to and from the Miami airport."

KEY LARGO D.B., BROOKFIELD, WIS.: "This was our first ocean boat dive and it was great. We saw numerous barracuda, tons of tropical fish, spotted eagle rays and even sharks." S.K., Roswell, Ga.: "I dove the Spiegel Grove down to 110 feet. It was huge and awesome." J.P., HOLMES, N.Y.: "The water was warm with clear visibility ... There were great restaurants and many dive shops to visit."

KEY WEST L.K., Newnan, Ga.: "I saw great reefs and wrecks teeming with marine life, warm water with great visibility and lots to see at fairly shallow depths for long bottom times. Highly recommended." J.T., COLUMBIA, S.C.: "There's plenty to do other than diving ... I saw lots of fish. Sometimes currents at some sites could give you a good workout." R.B., Ashland, Ohio: "Visibility was fantastic and there's plenty of topside attractions."

MARATHON D.R., CHESTERFIELD, MONT.: "The wreck of the Thunderbolt is a great dive. The reefs are healthy and loaded with fish." K.S., Roswell, GA.: "The fish life was plentiful at every site we went to, with lots of morays, a few nurse sharks, scorpionfish, spotted drums. Most of the sites are pretty shallow."

BIG PINE KEY

Looe Key Reef Resort and Dive Center (800) 942-5397, (305) 872-4244 web: www.diveflakeys.com - Only operation in Florida Keys offering 3-tank, 3-location diving and snorkel trip. PADI 5-star Gold Palm Resort, SSI Universal Referral location, package: Dive Pass-buy 3 trips and get the 4th free, \$125 p.p., plus equipment.

Paradise Divers, Inc. (800) 852-0348, (305) 872-1114 web: www.paradive rs.com Emphasis on courtesy, safety and friendly, personal service. package: Packages include all gear, 2-tank dives at Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary, \$70 p.p. Also, 10 percent discount for 3 trips, including wreck dives on the Adolphus Busch wreck.

Seahorse Scuba (305) 872-1362 web: www.seahorsescuba.net Minimum 2 divers, maximum 4 divers, 1 trip per day. Relaxed, easy, no-hurry diving.

Underseas Inc. (800) 446-5663, (305) 872-2700 web: www.keysdirectory.com/ underseas

ISLAMORADA/ **TAVERNIER**

Bud n' Mary's Dive Center (800) 344-7532, (305) 664-2211 web: www.key dives.com Emphasis on safe, friendly service. Uncrowded boats, great dive sites and locations other dive operations don't visit. package: Multi-dive package, save 10 percent, weights free with package. Gear rental package only. \$25.

Florida Kays Dive Center (800) 433-8946, (305) 852-4599 web: www.florl dakevsdivectr.com PADI 5-star Career Development Center, promoting safe diver training since 1983. Value packages available. package: Accommodations at Ocean Pointe Resort, half-day dive trips, 1-bedroom condo.

\$109 p.p., dbl. occ.; 2-bedroom condo, \$85 p.p., quad, occ. Holiday Isle Dive Shop (800) 327-7070, ext. 644, (305) 664-3483 web: www.diveholidavisle.com Hotel, dive shop, dive boat, pools, restaurants and bars all in one location at the Isle. Lady Cyana Divers Inc. (800) 221-8717, (305) 664-8717 web: www.ladycyana.com All employees are divernasters or better. Take safety seriously. package: Standard rooms, \$69 per night. Efficiencies, \$89 per night. Trip, plus 2 tanks and weights, \$60 p.p., per trip.

Rainbow Reef Dive Center (800) 457-4354, (305) 664-4600 web: www.rainbowreef.us Small boats, emphasis on friendly, full service. Free high-speed internet access, advanced open-water, secure on-site gear storage, complimentary kayaks and bicycles, plus soda, juice, bottled water and chocolate chip cookies on every trip. package: Multi-trip dive discounts after second dive trip. Dive two locations from \$45 p.p., includes tanks and weights. Classes from \$140.

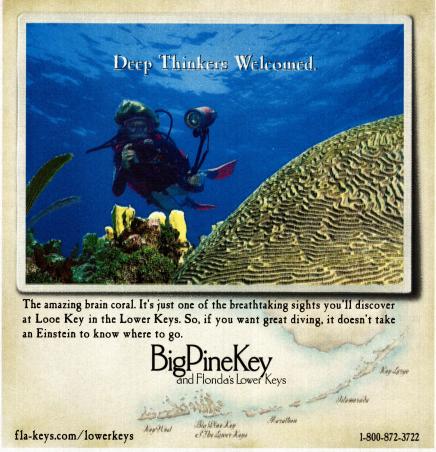
Tavernier Dive Center (800) 787-9797, (305) 852-4007 web: www.tavernierdivecenter.com Accessible to Key Largo and Islamorada dive sites. Gear storage offered, professional staff, clean boats, cater to recreational and technical divers. package: 10-dive package, \$500 p.p., nontransferable. Dive/Stay package: 1 dive trip, 1-night stay, \$95 p.p., dbl. occ.

KEY LARGO

Admiral Dive Center (800) 346-3483, (305) 451-1114 web: www.admiralcenter.com @ Customized dive vacations, visit the dive sites you want. package: Key Largo oceanfront accommodations from \$50 per night. Dive packages and all levels of scuba instruction. Private 6-passenger boat.

Amy Slate's Amoray Dive (800) 426-6729, (305) 451-3595 web: www.amoray.com Everything is all in one placerooms, diving, snorkeling, scuba instruction, rental equipment. gear storage lockers, breakfast, kayaks, pool, sandy beach, waterfront view of famous Florida Bay sunset. package: 4 two-tank dive trips, \$180 p.p., includes tanks and weights. Night dives can be substituted for dive trip. Additional trips, \$45 p.p. with tanks and weights. Call for dive/accommodation package deals. Continental breakfast, snorkel equipment, kayaks and use of heated pool and outdoor grills included with room rental.

Aqua-Nut Divers / Kelly's on the Bay (800) 226-0415, (305) 451-1622 web: www.aqua-nuts.com PADI Gold Palm Resort since the inception of the program. Environmentally conscious, host the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution's Florida Reefs Program, first-class "eco-tours" into the backwaters of Florida Bay. package: 3 nights accommodations, 8 dives, continental breakfast, \$285 p.p., dbl. occ. Rates exclude holidays and are slightly higher on weekends. Group discounts available. Captain Slate's Atlantis Dive Center (800) 331-3483, (305) 451-3020 web: www.captainslate.com Largest facility in the Keys, closest dive shop to Spiegel Grove, only glassbottom/snorkel boat in the Keys. package: Special packages with





TERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

custom dive plans and hotel accommodations offered.

HMS Minnow Charters Inc. (800) 451-7834 366-9301. (305)web: www.hmsminnow.com No more than 6 divers, personalized and uncrowded trips. Visit locations that offer best conditions and desired sites, package: Two-tank dive trips, multiple locations, \$50 p.p.

Horizon Divers (800) 984-3483, (305) 453-3535 web: www.horizondivers.com Passenger count on 45-foot catamaran restricted to half the Coast Guard limit. Ship us your gear and we ship it back if you don't want to lug it through airport. Emphasis on quality service and value. package: Multi-trip discounts, two-tank dive trips twice daily. Purchase 3-trip card and get 15 percent discount off regular dive rate. Purchase 5-trip card and get 20 percent discount. Free twotank dives to students who complete any certification course. Reduced rates at neighboring hotels when booking direct.

It's A Dive Watersports (800) 809-9881, (305) 453-9881 web: www.itsadive.com Full-service dive and watersports operator specializing in instruction for families and kids. Diving, snorkeling, parasailing, waverunners and kayaks offered. package: 5 reef trips, \$225 per diver; 3 reef trips, \$145 per diver. Each trip visits 2 sites, tanks and weights included. Dive/Stay packages available.

Jules' Undersea Lodge (305) 451-2353 web: www.iul.com Only underwater hotel in the world. package: Overnight accommodations, all time spent at the hotel is logable dive time, breakfast and dinner, dive gear included, starting from \$295 p.p. Resort dive training available.

Ocean Divers - North Store (877) 451-0037, (305) 451-0037 web: americandiv ing.com Scubapro adventure store.

Ocean Divers Inc. (800) 451-1113, (305) 451-1113 web: www.oceandivers.com Quiescence Diving Services (305) 451-2440 web: www.quiescence.com 6-passenger maximum on boats. Visit web site for packages.

Sea Dwellers Dive Center of Key Largo (800) 451-3640, (305) 451-3640 web: www.seadwellers.com Emphasis

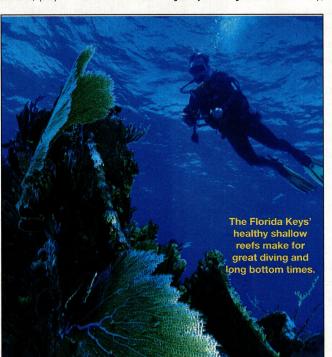
on service and personal attention to all family members, divers and snorkelers. Not a pricecutting, cattle-boat operation. package: Holiday Inn Key Largo Resort-3-day, 2-night package for 2 divers, includes continental breakfast daily, 2-location dive trip daily, tanks and weights, boat just steps from your room, \$276 p.p., dbl. occ., standard room.

Silent World Dive Center (800) 966-3483, (305) 451-3252 web: www.silent on personalized service, free instructor/dive guide. Operating since 1990, we dive Looe Key to the Dry Tortugas. package: 2-tank wreck and reef dives with superior room, includes breakfast, \$99 p.p., dbl. occ.

Dive Key West Inc. (800) 426-0707, (305) 296-3823 web: www.divekeywest.com Oldest dive shop in Florida Keys, personalized approach to diving and instructional packages. Key West's largest full-service dive shop:

Voted the #1 dive shop for past six years by locals in Key West.

Subtropic Dive Center (800) 853-DIVE, (305) 296-9914 web: www.subtropic. com Largest full-service dive resort in Key West, running 3 boats with choice of wreck and reef diving. PADI 5-star Gold Palm Resort, SSI Training Facility, NAUI affiliate. package: 3 days, 2 nights at Grand Key Resort, includes diving (6 dives), tanks and weights, \$433.50, taxes not included.



worldkevlargo.com Smaller boats, fewer divers, emphasis on personal service. Owner at the business full-time. PADI- and NAUI-affiliated. package: 4 nights accommodations, 5 days of diving, \$280 p.p., dbl. occ.

KEY WEST

A Key West Coral Reef Trip (305) 292-1345 web: www.reefchief.com The only

65-foot sailing schooner dive boat in the Keys. Off-the-beaten-track, ecological coral reef trips. package: Half-day sail. We offer only snorkel and free diving. Morning trip, \$40 p.p. Afternoon trip, \$45 for 2-hour stop at the coral reef and sunset sail return.

Bonsai Diving (305) 294-2921 web: www.bonsaidiving.com Fast 6-passenger, extended-range power catamaran, emphasis charters, rentals, instruction, sales, air and repair. package: 2 nights lodging, 2 days diving, includes tanks and weights, \$99 p.p., dbl. occ., available May through December. Discounted custom packages also available.

Key West Diving Society (866) 593-4837, (305) 292-3221 web: www.key westdivingsociety.com - Small operation, no cattle boats. Facility with pool and dive boat next to shop. package: 2 nights accommodations at Fairfield Inn by Marriott, continental breakfast, 2 days of diving, tanks and weights, \$191 p.p., dbl. occ., from May through October 2003.

Southpoint Divers (800) 891-DIVE, (305) 292-9778 web: www.southpoint divers.com Frequently ranked in Rodale's Readers' Choice Awards, this year we're #4.

MARATHON

Abyss Dive Center (800) 457-0134, (305) 743-2126 web: www.abyssdive.com Emphasis on comfort, convenience and safety; 34-foot, 6-passenger, customized dive boat. Choose from over 50 dive locations, many dive boat amenities. package: Hotel/dive packages are available year-round and start at \$73 p.p., per night, including accommodations and a 2location reef trip.

Capt. Hook's Marina & Dive Center (800) CPT-HOOK, (305) 743-2444 web: www.captainhooks.com ... The only PADI 5-star dive center on Marathon and surrounding islands. Convenient reef and wreck trips, emphasis on personal attention to large and small groups. package: 7-day package includes 3 dive trips, 1 full day offshore fishing charter and accommodations, \$950 p.p., dbl. occ.

Hall's Dive Center International Diving Career Institute (800) 331-HALL, (305) 743-5929 web: www.hallsdiving.com in business for over 25 years, offers extensive training, products and diving services. package: Dive toprated Middle Keys sites while staying at toprated resorts. Dive and accommodation packages start at \$266.10 p.p., dbl. occ., for 3 nights, 3 trips (2 dives per trip), air fills included.

Middle Keys Scuba Center (305)

743-2902 web: www.divingdiscovery.com Full-production video studio. package: 3 nights accommodations, 3 days of diving, from \$84 p.p.

The Diving Site (800) 634-3935, (305) 289-1021 web: www.divingsite.com Marathon's oldest and largest dive and snorkel center.

FRENCH POLYNESIA (TAHITI AND

HER ISLANDS) Yes, the islands look just like the postcards. No, the women don't wear grass skirts all the time. Honeymooners have known French Polynesia's sublime charm for decades, but divers are just catching on. It's shark territory, and hand-feeding is still the method of choice for most dive operators. Efficient operators cater to divers from around the Pacific Rim with resort pickups and fast boats. Afternoon dives are rare, however, so go live-aboard if you want to max out your bottom time.

BEST DIVES Hard-core divers will beat fins to Rangiroa, where a 400-square-mile lagoon—the world's second largest—is rimmed with tidal flats and hosts gray reef sharks, blacktip sharks and mantas. If you're looking for nitrogen-filled days of shark diving and romance-filled nights, Moorea and Bora Bora are safe bets. Tahiti Iti, the main island's southern peninsula, is home to remote, pristine wall diving a two-hour drive from Papeete.

WEATHER Temperatures are hot and humid in the wet season from November to April. Trade winds moderate the climate and keep conditions drier and in the 70Fs the rest of the year.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Varies from the high 70Fs to mid-80Fs, depending on season—and they're reversed here in the southern hemisphere.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Triple digits consistently; this is some of the clearest water in the Pacific.

TRAVEL SAVVY Bring along a phrasebook, as French is widely spoken. Go European—depths are cited in meters and psi in bars. Tipping is often not expected.

DESTINATION LINKS Tahiti Tourisme's web site at www.GoTo Tahiti.com.

READER COMMENTS

WU/

T.B., SANTA CRUZ, CALIF.: "This was an amazing place to see pelagics. They come in to the fast current passes for food and cleaning. You are guaranteed to see sharks on every dive, but I also saw manta rays, spotted eagle rays in schools, pods of dolphin, huge schools of barracuda, and plenty of the usual Pacific tropical fish ... This isn't a soft coral destination, but the hard corals can be very sculptural, and there are still plenty of small fish feeding in the coral ... Another plus about the diving is that you will have at least 100 feet of visibility on every dive outside the lagoon. Topside was beautiful as well. Overall, this was a great place to get close to some big fish, and a very romantic getaway for couples especially." E.R., Krakow, Wis.: "Topside, the topography was incredible ... Snorkeling was as amazing as the diving. I saw beautiful blue lagoons." G.R., MERCER ISLAND, WASH.: "We saw 20 to 50-plus blacktip, lemon, whitetip and gray sharks ... Reef fish were plentiful and very curious, swimming right into your mask ... We also found lots of eels, turtles, lionfish, barracuda, large triggerfish and we even spotted the occasional stingray ... Hard corals were plentiful and in good condition."

BORA BORA

Bora Bora Blue Nui Dive Center

(011) 689-677907 web: www.bluenui.com

Professionally appointed, spacious dive centers with state-of-the-art equipment for viewing your underwater videos, libraries for fish



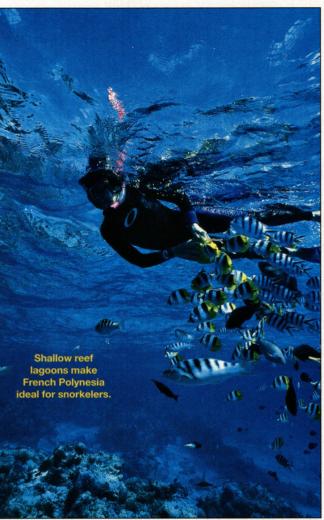
Bora Diving Center (011) 689-677184 web: www.boradive.com PADI, CMAS, ANMP, FFESSM diving center, located on Matira beach next to Hotel Bora Bora. Five boats and six fully qualified instructors. Famous for our personal service and big marine life. Dive day and night with manta ravs. Shark dives, drift dives, caves and video services also available. package: 6-day package includes 10 dives, 5 nights accommodations, transfers, diving equipment, breakfast for \$749 p.p., dbl. occ.

Nemo World (011) 689-67-7785 web: www.nemodivebora.com Video services available for dives. package: Two-tank morning dives costs CFP13,000, and we have a special package of 6 dives for CFP36,000. Three-night package includes accommodations and diving (2 dives in the morning), for CFP95,546 p.p.

TOPdive (011) 689-605050 web: www. topdive.com Bora Bora is the headquarters for the TOPdive family of dive centers. Situated inside the TOPdive Resort, the Bora Bora location is equipped with four boats, allowing it to cater to dive groups of all sizes. package: Check web site for inter-island packages.

MOOREA

Bathy's Club Moorea (011) 689-563144 web: www.bathys.net First PADI 5star dive center in French Polynesia, Famous for shark feedings with lemon sharks and for



stingray dive sites. package: 10 percent off for Rodale's Scuba Diving readers who come with one of the magazines. Not cumulative with any other discount

TOPdive (011) 689-605050 web: www.topdive.com French Polynesia's largest dive operation with locations in Bora Bora, Moorea, Rangiroa and Tahiti. package: Check web site for inter-island packages.

MANIHI

Manihi Blue Nui Dive Center

(011) 689-964217 web: www.bluenui.com Spacious dive center with equipment for video

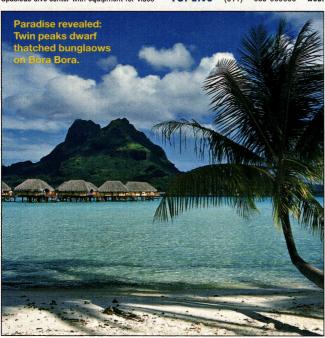
sary dive equipment is included in the price of each dive. Storage available for personal gear. package: Five-dive packages, approx. \$285 p.p. For all-inclusive packages with meals and lodging, please see www.pearlresorts.com.

TAHITI

Iti Diving International (011) 689-577793 web: www.itidiving.pf The best wall dive specialist in French Polynesia. package: Do two dives per diver, get 10 percent discount when making reservations during the week

TOPdive (011) 689-605050 web:

with Rodale's Scuba Diving.



viewing, library for fish identification and discussions before and after dives. Personalized service where each and every diver is important. Small groups according to level of certification and experience. Dive sites located within five to 10 minutes of the dive center. package: 5 dives, approx. \$285 p.p. For lodging packages with meals included, please go to www.pearlresorts.com

TAHAA

Tahaa Blue Nui Dive Center (011)

656778 web: www.bluenui.com Luxury resort in the Tahitian Islands. Our spacious dive center has a library and classrooms with personalized and friendly service. All neces-

www.topdive.com Launched in June 2002. TOPdive is now located at the Sheraton Hotel in Papeete and features the same high quality of diving as all other TOPdive centers. package: Check web site for inter-island packages.

TIKEHAU

Tikehau Blue Nui Dive Center

(011) 689-962240 web: www.bluenui.com Spacious, comfortable dive boat, brand-new American-standard equipment provided in the price of each dive, plus personalized service and a state-of-the-art compressor for fast fills, package: 5 dives, approx. \$285 p.p. For lodging with meals included, go to www.pearlresorts.com

HAWAII It's so remote that more than a quarter of its fish are found nowhere else on the planet, yet so wired you'll be able to call your friends and tell them all about it from your cell phone. Welcome to Hawaii, smack dab in the middle of the Pacific, our 50th state 2,500 miles from the nearest continent. It's an exotic destination without the language barriers, passport requirements and currency exchange. Though it doesn't have the colorful coral reefs common in the Caribbean, it does have unique underwater structures punctuated by lava formations and tubes, and some excellent wreck dives. One of the Pacific's finest family dive destinations, Hawaii offers a choice of morning or afternoon dives that allows you to maximize bottom time and family time in one vacation.

BEST DIVES Kauai's Sheraton Caverns is a series of lava tubes that range in depth from 20 to 60 feet stuffed with Hawaiian turkeyfish, lobster, wrasse and eels. Advanced divers may want to skip Maui's Molokini Crater and head for current-swept Moku Ho'oniki Island and glimpses of hammerheads. Oahu boasts surprisingly good wrecks, including the 180-foot oil tanker YO-257 with its neighbor wreck, the 155-foot freighter San Pedro. The Big Island's Garden Eel Cove boasts its namesake eels, but also endemic Hawaiian species like Heller's barracuda, milletseed butterflyfish and Achilles tang.

WEATHER The rugged green islands are sunny and warm with frequent, brief rain showers. There's very little annual variation in climate—the average high is 85F; the average low 70F. A light sweater or jacket is a big plus in winter.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Water temps are more seasonal, and can bottom out in the low to mid-70Fs in winter and spring, with lows in the 80Fs in summer and fall.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Varies from island to island, but is usually excellent; often above 100 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY There's no bad time of year to visit Hawaii, but swells from Alaska in winter make diving the state's northern sites practically impossible. Bring at least a 3mm suit in winter if you're susceptible to cold.

DESTINATION LINKS The Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau web site at www.gohawaii.com.

READER COMMENTS

KAUAI M.E., Pleasant Hill, Calif.: "There are lots of turtles and clear, warm water ... A wide variety of marine life." R.C., YAKIMA, WASH.: "Great shore diving at Koloa Landing and wonderful snorkeling. I could snorkel with turtles."

MAUI J.S., Mt. Pleasant, S.C.: "Maui was awesome. It was neat to see the tons of sharks and turtles that inhabit the island's waters." J.P., Pleasant Grove. UTAH: "Marine life was great. I saw mantas, turtles and the whitetip reef sharks were awesome." B.B., Saugus, Calif.: "The whale season was incredible."

OAHU L.M., PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII: "There's lots to see for beginner and experienced divers alike-various depths and visibility options. The aquatic life is awesome." T.S., Barrow, Alaska: "I love the wrecks, especially the Corsair plane-a true wreck."

SEAPICS.COM DOUG PERRINE

INTERNATIONAL DIVE

BIG ISLAND K.P., LEXINGTON, Ky.: "As a mostly Caribbean diver, the lava tubes and arches on the Kona Coast off Big Island's west coast make this an exciting destination ... The marine life is plentiful." L.S., SPOKANE, WASH .: "The featured attraction was the humpback whale. Some whales came very close to the boat ... The coral was magnificent and very pristine ... There are lots of colorful and very calm fish to enjoy." T.S., Laguna Beach, Calif.: "I loved the marine lifesharks, mantas, dolphin and lots of big animals. It can really be exciting through the passes-great current."

KAUAI

Bubbles Below Inc. Scuba Charters-Kauai and Niihau (866) 524-6268, (808) 332-7333 web: www.Bubbles BelowKauai.com Eco-tours with an emphasis on marine biology/ecology and slowing down to identify and observe marine life behaviors. Hot shower on board, dive lights and computers provided at no extra cost. Take time out for dolphins, whales and monk seals. No mixed groups, certified divers only. Whole boat rentals available. package: Kauai charter base price \$105, Niihau/Lehua Rock, \$245. Dive 3 days and receive 10 percent off each day; the 4th through 6th day receive 15 percent off; and the 7th, 20 percent. Niihau charters are included in multipleday discount. Snacks and beverages included.

Dive Kauai Scuba Center (800) 828-3483. (808) 822-0452 web: www.dive kauai.com Kauai's exclusive PADI Gold Palm Instructor Development Dive Center. package: 7 nights hotel. 7 days rental car with unlimited mileage, garden-view room at the Kauai Sands Hotel, 2 days of two-tank boat charters, \$555 p.p., dbl. occ.

Hawaii Tec & Trek Scuba (808) 644-1312 web: www.kauaiscuba.com ■ Dive on your schedule to less-frequented and more pristine sites. package: Concurrent private PADI & TDI Cavern Diver courses with dual certifications: 3 days, 4 dives, rental of specialty equipment included, \$670 p.p.

Seasport Divers (800) 685-5889, (808) 742-9303 web: www.seasportdivers.com Two locations, all agency affiliations, nitrox, inhouse film processing, Niihau charters, two Coast Guard-certified vessels, only Scubapro, Sherwood and Atomic dealers. Offer complete rentals and retail stock, 12 instructors on staff and packages available. Rated in Rodale's Scuba Diving "Top 100" Readers' Choice Awards.

Sunrise Scuba Adventures &

Kauai Nitrox Divers (800) 695-3483. (808) 635-7333 web: www.sunrisescuba.com

MAUI

Dive & Sea Maui (800) 526-9915, (808) 874-1952 web: www.diveandsea maui.com Only one trip per day with only six divers; take our time and allow every diver to stay diving until either computer or air ends the dive. Dives are slow with photographers in mind; we attempt to show divers as much sea life as possible. Instructors and divernasters have logged thousands of dives in Maui. package: 1 day of two-tank diving, \$115 p.p., includes gear and lunch; \$105 with your gear. 2 days of two-tank diving, \$210 p.p., includes gear and lunch. 3 days of two-tank diving, \$300 p.p., includes gear and lunch, 3 or more days for \$100 p.p., private charters up to six

passengers, \$650, includes gear and lunch. Rodale's Scuba Diving Special: Book two or more days and take off 10 percent when booking through toll-free number above.

Dive Maui (866) 821-7450, (808) 667-2080 web: www.divemauiscuba.com Small husiness focused on customer service: work with small groups to ensure quality instruction. package: Specialize in scuba instruction from open-water to divemaster; also offer boat dives. Open-water class is 3 days and includes 6 ocean dives. Universal referrals accepted, scuba refreshers, intro dives and guided dives

Ed Robinson's Diving

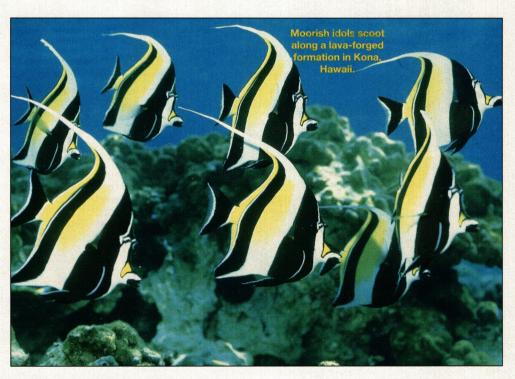
Adventures (800) 635-1273, (808) 879-3584 web: www.maui-scuba.com Personalized service, small diver to guide ratios, biology 101 lessons. package: 3- to 5-day multi-day tours with over 25 dive sites to choose from. Divers select the trips that most effectively meet their skill levels and diving needs. Trips that carry over into early afternoon (three-tank trips to Lanai) include lunch. Trips range from \$110 to \$165 p.p., depending on the tour and gear rental needs.

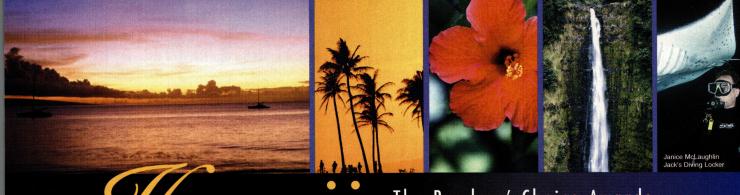
Extended Horizons Scuba Maui Lanai (888) 348-3628, (808) 667-0611

weh: www.scubadivemaui.com Tours quided by educated and experienced naturalists who lead the dive at an easy pace and show divers interesting marine life. Pristine Lanai diving, use of moorings keeps it that way. Placed the first 14 mooring pins on Lanai, emphasis on eco-informative tours. package: 2 days, 1 night, 4 boat dives on Lanai, 1 beach dive, gear and meal included, \$292.50 p.p.

Lahaina Divers. Inc. (800) 998-3483, (808) 667-7496 web: www.lahaina divers.com Established in 1978, operates two large USCG-certified vessels virtually 365 days a year, multiple charters daily, wide variety of island destinations. We have our own certified air and nitrox fill station. All dive guides are full-time professional instructors. PADI, SSI and NAUI-affiliated. package: 3 days of diving on 3 two-tank charters to 3 islands for \$300 n.n. includes tanks weights snacks. and beverages. Direct bookings only. Book by June 30, dive by July 30, 2003. Cannot be combined with any other offers or discounts.

Makena Coast Dive Charters (800) 833-6483, (808) 874-1273 web: www.MauiUnderwater.com Can customize dives for experienced divers or beginners. Captain and crew have perfect safety record





The Readers' Choice Awards Overflowed in 2003.



Eco-Adventures from \$425 w/tax- 5 nights hotel. 5 days rental car. 2 days diving. Spacious vessel, small groups, fun crew, technical/mixed gas available. Topside activities: hike, horseback ride, kayak, helicopter, whale watch and more. FREE vacation and air quotes. Multi-islands packages available. BOOK DIRECT & SAVE. 800-949-3483. www.ecodive.com



Ocean Concepts Is all about diving! ACTION, ADVENTURE, FUN. and GREAT VALUE for the ENTIRE FAMILY, PADI 5 Star Center. Dive on Oahu, 7 nights with 4 days boat diving from \$499. 800-808-DIVE (3483) RSD@oceanconcepts.com



Lahaina Divers Three days, Three Islands, Three two tank charters. Includes snacks, beverages, tanks and weights, gear transport to and from the dive vessel, and a Free poster. \$300pp. Book by March 31, 2003 and dive by June, 30, 2003. 1-800-998-3483, www.lahainadivers.com, lahdiver@maui.net



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Ed Robinson's Diving Adventures voted Best Crew in the World in 2002 Rodale's Survey! Personal Service with 4:1 diver/guide ratio on select trips. 3 Tank Adventure trips for serious divers. Every trip is an adventure! Accommodations available. 1-800-635-1273 maui-scuba.com

HAWAII

after more than 27 years in the diving business. Private trips also available. **package:** 10 percent discount on multiple days of diving; call for other discounts.

Maui Dive Shop (800) 542-3483, (808) 879-1775, ext. 5 web: www.mauidive shop.com ■ Eight locations island-wide, plus internet department. Hawaii's largest dive retailer offering daily snorkel and scuba charters, equipment rental, accommodations for the Maui Dive Lodge, Maui Dive Jeep rentals and full-service activity center. package: 7-night accommodations at Maui Dive Lodge and 4 two-tank boat dives, unlimited tanks for shore diving, \$1,073 p.p., dbl. occ.

Maui Dreams Dive Co. (888) 921-DIVE, (808) 874-5332 web: www.mauidreams diveco.com Specializes in shore diving and dive training. Classes are small (no more than four students per class), emphasis on relaxed and personalized experience. No time limits for dives, accommodates special requests, refreshers incorporated into guided dives available. package: DPV (scooter) specialty course, \$129. Learn to fly under water and explore Maui's hidden treasures. Price includes gear, class materials, 2 scooter dives, certification card.

Maui Scuba Diving (877) 873-4837, (808) 669-2071 web: www.mauiscubadiving.cc Emphasis on professional service, down-to-earth prices. Free pickup from Lahaina Harbor for cruise customers for beach dives only. package: 4 days of diving, includes two-tank boat dive, night dive, 2 daytime beach dives, call for details, \$274.90 p.p.

Mike Severns Diving (808) 879-6596 web: www.mikesevernsdiving.com ■ Dives guided by experienced biologists and Hawaii naturalists. Detailed dive briefings describe animals unique to Hawaii, plus animal behaviors. Only dive operation on Maui to offer day and night coral spawning charters in spring and summer. package: 3 days or more of diving, \$10 off per day.

Scuba Shack - Maui (877) 213-4488, (808) 891-0500 web: www.scubashack.com 2002 Rodale's Scuba Diving "Top 100" Readers' Choice Awards: #1 staff in the world, #1 dive operator in the U.S. and Hawaii, #4 dive operator in the world in 2003. New equipment on the boat every six months. Small

owner-operated dive business. package:
Weeklong accommodations in deluxe condo or
guest house, 3 days of boat diving, unlimited
beach diving, \$700 p.p., dbl. occ. Dive-only
package with 4 days of diving, \$85 per day.

Trinity Tours (800) 621-8942, (808) 661-8085 web: www.mauiguesthouse.com ■ Small groups, individual attention. "Dive cleaning" station. Breakfasts served, kitchen facilities for lunch and dinner. Stocked laundry room with "no quarters needed." package:

no-decompression limits. No more than four students per instructor, maximum of six certified divers per guide. Take memories home on CD-ROM of high-resolution digital photos taken during dives. High-tech, quiet diving with semi-closed rebreathers offered, perfect for underwater photographers. package: 3-day advanced certification—Choose 3 charters, diving 6 times over 3 days with at least one deep dive to earn PADI advanced open-water certification. Cost including books is \$320 to \$350

www.breezehawaii.com Well-trained, experienced staff.

Ocean Concepts Scuba (800) 808-3483, (808) 682-2511 web: www.oceancon cepts.com Attention to diver safety, comfort and fun. Eight locations including Camp Smith, Kaneohe, Pearl Harbor and Waianae. package: 3 days (do not have to be consecutive) of two-tank, two-location deep and shallow profile boat dives, \$260 without equipment; \$295 with equipment. All programs include round-trip transportation from Waikiki hotels, tanks, weights, lunch, fresh fruit, snacks and soft drinks. Preferred rates for active duty and retired U.S. armed forces members.



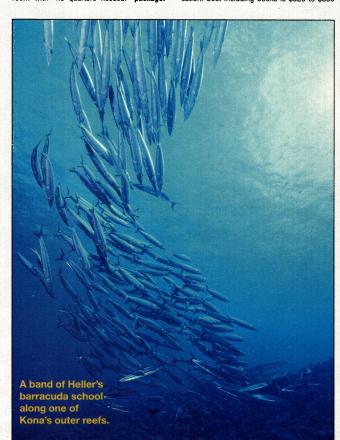
Dive Makai Charters (808) 329-2025 web: www.divemakai.com ■ Known for detailed marine life briefings, ability to show divers unique animals and behaviors. Night dives on request. package: Over 5 days of diving, from \$79, plus tax, for a two-tank morning dive.

Eco-Adventures (800) 949-3483, (808) 329-7116 web: www.ecodive.com ■ Largest boat with 4 divers per guide, full-service travel agency, mixed gas facility with dedicated vessel, teach classes from beginner to instructor level. package: 6 nights accommodations in ocean-view room, 2 two-tank morning charters, 1 two-tank afternoon and night charter,

rental car with unlimited mileage, \$695 p.p.

Red Sail Sports Hawaii (877) 271-8458, (808) 886-2876 web: www.redsail.com package: 2003 Dive, Dive, Dive & Sail Package—custom dive package that lets you choose your own accommodations and dive with Red Sail Sports. Includes daily two-tank boat dives, tanks, weights and belt, sunset cruise aboard 50-foot catamaran, Red Sail Sports T-shirt, 10 percent discount on clothing at all Red Sail Sports retail locations. Starts at \$336 p.p. for 3 days. Extra days \$99 p.p. Valid through Dec. 20, 2003.

Sandwich Isle Divers (888) 743-3483, (808) 329-9188 web: www.sand wichisledivers.com Small charters, 6 passengers maximum per boat. In business for 20 years, emphasis on friendly experience. package: Two-tank dives, \$80 to \$95.



Small, four-guest room bed and breakfast that caters to divers. Customize all dive packages depending on length of stay, number of dives requested, or based on dollar amount.

OAHU

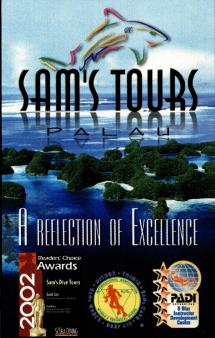
AAA Diving (877) 617-2822, (808) 221-8346 web: www.aaadiving.com ■ All gear is provided at no extra charge. For comfort and safety, dive gear is replaced each year. Free transportation to and from Waikiki. AAA Diving has a perfect safety record. Shallow dives planned for 45 minutes; deep dives planned to

p.p., depending on charters chosen.

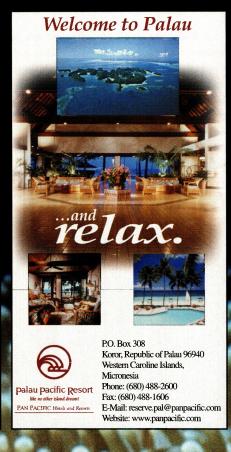
AquaZone SCUBA Diving Center (866) 923-3483, (808) 923-3483 web: www.AquaZone.net ■ Located at the Outrigger Waikiki on the Beach Hotel. Offers free scuba lessons in hotel pool to ensure first-time divers are comfortable. Free transportation to boats from Waikiki. package: Free scuba lessons for first-time divers. 5 nights accommodations in Waikiki, 3 days of 2-tank boat dives, airport transfers, all equipment, transportation to boats, \$645 p.p., dbl. occ.

Breeze Hawaii (808) 735-1857 web:

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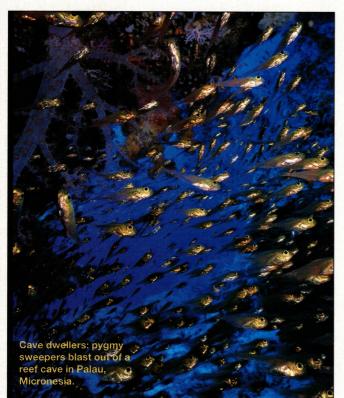
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MICRONESIA Spread across a vast water-scape, Micronesia's island nations are surrounded by some of the most biologically diverse and pristine reefs in the world. Guam, Kosrae, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Pohnpei, Rota, Saipan, Truk Lagoon and Yap offer a mesmerizing array of diving opportunities: caves, reefs, wrecks, walls, drift dives, shore dives. Although the distance to travel is great, the trek pays off with untouched diving on islands that have yet to witness widespread development or exploitation.

BEST DIVES To make the most of a trip to Micronesia, it's best to incorporate several islands into your itinerary. Whether you decide on a land-based package or opt for the live-aboard route, your dive experience will differ dramatically depending on where you go. Palau's steep walls like Blue Corner are a rite of passage, Yap's manta dive is legendary and Truk is an underwater mecca for wreck divers.

WEATHER Tropical and humid with daytime temperatures hovering in the mid- to high 80Fs. Nighttime temps can drop to the mid- to low 70Fs.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Water temps remain in the high 70Fs to mid-80Fs all year.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY More than 100 feet is not uncommon on good days off Palau, Saipan and Rota, off Pohnpei and Kosrae's outer reefs and on Yap's wall dives. Vis can be slightly lower in Truk Lagoon and on manta dives in Yap.

TRAVEL SAVVY Long-haul flights to get to the islands require reading material, melatonin for jet lag and a good neck pillow. Be

sure to get a hotel room for long layovers or overnighting in Guam, the gateway to the region.

DESTINATION LINKS Visit the various islands' tourism bureaus at www.visit-palau.com (Palau), www.visityap.com (Yap), www.visitguam.org (Guam), www.visit-marianas.com (the Marianas), www.visit-chuuk.com (Chuuk), www.visit-kosrae.com (Kosrae), www.visit-fsm.org (the Federated States of Micronesia), www.yokwe-yok.com/englishtop.html (the Marshall Islands).

READER COMMENTS

PALAU M.B., SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS: "There's lots of new fish and other marine life." R.K., Pacifica, Calif.: "Great views, awesome drop-offs and canyons." L.J., Eagle River, Ark.: "The people are warm and friendly. The place had personality and color—lush, lush, lush! The weather was fantastic."

TRUK C.G., WORMLEY, U.K.: "The wrecks are superb, both for their structural integrity, the artifacts and the beautiful and abundant coral and fish life. The diving itself is relaxed with warm temperatures, low currents and good visibility, making the wrecks living wonders rather than foreboding hulks." F.C., YIGO, GUAM: "Fantastic amount of history. Most, if not all, of the wrecks still have their artifacts intact—local laws prohibit the taking. World War II items (including unopened beer and saki bottles) are there for everyone to still see." L.L., PHOENIX, ARIZ.: "I enjoy the diversity of diving ... One can either wreck dive and do the penetration or dive to see the diversity of life on the wrecks."

YAP N.G., LONDON, ENGLAND: "The manta rays were unbelievable. I saw beautiful coral gardens and underwater topography." S.S., Baden, Pa.: "In addition to diving, it's a great cultural trip. The small villages with simple living and self-sustaining economy made up of fishing and gardening are in stark contrast to the modern lodge accommodations." F.M., Madison, Wis.: "There are other activities besides snorkeling, such as visiting villages, dancers and kayaking."

KOSRAE

Kosrae Nautilus Resort inc. (011)

691-370-3567 web: www.kosraenautilus.com
■ Guidebooks have described Kosrae Nautilus
Resort as the cleanest, friendliest place in all
Micronesia. We have the fastest boats and will
arrive at the best sites in a minimum of time.
package: Mention Rodale's Scuba Diving and
get 5 nights accommodations and 4 dive days
for \$540 p.p., dbl. occ.

Kosrae Village Ecolodge /
Sleeping Lady Divers (011) 691-3703483 web: www.kosraevillage.com ■ PADI 5star and IANTD technical facility, only operation on Kosrae to offer nitrox, rental equipment, certified tested air fills, factory authorized repairs for several brands. Only eco-lodge
on Kosrae. package: 5 nights, 3 two-tank dive
days, \$553 p.p., dbl. occ., tax included, nitrox
available for small surcharge.

MARSHALL ISLANDS

Bako Divers, Ltd. (011) 692-625-2525 web: www.bakodivers.com More than 30 dive sites within 45 minutes of our dock in Majuro, including reefs, wrecks, drift diving, extended range, and more. Operate from the Outrigger Marshall Islands Resort. package: 7 days, 8 nights at the Outrigger, 14 dives, includes round-trip airfare from Vancouver. British Columbia, and Oakland, Burbank or Orange County, Calif., \$2,400 p.p., dbl. occ. Bikini Atoll Divers (011) 692-625-4265 web: www.bikiniatoll.com ■ Dives the largest diveable vessel in the world, the 900foot aircraft carrier USS Saratoga, Admiral Yamamoto's flagship Nagato, from which he ordered the attack on Pearl Harbor, as well as submarines, destroyers, transports and battleships. package: \$2,750 for one week of 12 decompression dives on Rikini Atoll's nuclear

MICRONESIA

TIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

fleet. Dives last 60-90 minutes. Package includes meals and room on Bikini all airfare: hotel and meals outside of Bikini are excluded. Dive season March through November, dive week runs Wednesday to Wednesday.

PALAU

Fish 'n Fins (011) 680-488-2637 web: www.fishnfins.com Personal service, comfortable boats, unlimited diving program. package: 7 nights at West Plaza Hotels, 5 days of two-tank diving, 1-day canoe trip, all transfers, continental breakfast, lunches, drinks, unlimited diving on the Fish 'n Fins house reef. \$795 p.p., dbl. occ.

Neco Marine (800) 348-0842, (011) 680-488-2009/1755 web: www.necomarine. com In the diving business since 1984. Emphasis on relaxing diving and personal service. package: Two-tank dive day includes guide, tanks, weights, hotel pickup/delivery, lunch, drinks and scenic tour to and from dive sites for \$99.50; group discounts may apply.

Sam's Tours (011) 680-488-1062 web: www.samstours.com Consistently recognized by Rodale's Scuba Diving's "Top 100" Readers' Choice Awards for service, staff and value. Rated best dive operator and best staff in 2001 and 2002. Fully appointed PADI 5-star IDC Center, underwater photography with KD Photo. Scubapro and Aqualung sales and service, IANTD Tec Diving Facility, Bottom Time Bar & Grill, located on the water overlooking the Rock Islands, package: 7 nights at the West Plaza Hotel, 5 days of two-tank boat diving, complimentary Jellyfish Lake visit, 1 full-day guided kayak tour, daily breakfast at hotel, lunch and refreshments on tours, hotel room tax, Koror and Peleliu state diving permits, round-trip airport and hotel transfers, tanks, weights and belt, \$880 p.p., dbl. occ. Mention Rodale's Scuba Diving and get a free Palau

Splash Dive Center (011) 680-488-2600, ext. 485 web: www.splash-palau.com PADI 5-star IDC, PADI specialty courses,

photo center, equipment sales and rental. Dive popular sites, including Blue Corner, Ulong and German channels, and Chandelier Cave.

POHNPEI

The Village / Village Tour and Dive Service (011) 691-320-2797 web: www.thevillagehotel.com One of Micronesia's original eco-resorts, scuba dive the reefs, walls and atoll passes of Pohnpei.

TRUK LAGOON

Truk Stop Hotel / Truk Lagoon Dive Center (011) 691-330-4232 web: www.trukstophotel.net Caters to technical diving, nitrox available, daily wreck diving, shark-feeding dives. package: 6 nights accommodations, 5 days diving (10 dives), airport transfers, welcome drink, \$720 p.p., dbl. occ., additional days, \$120. Night dives, \$50.

Beyond The Reef (011) 691-350-3483

web: www.diveyap.com Caters to small groups typically 4 divers per hoat with private guide and crew. Personal attention, small group sizes allow for better manta dives. All boats equipped with VHF radios, oxygen and first-aid kits; dive trips are structured for maximum safety and enjoyment. package: 3 nights Oceanview Hotel, 2 two-tank dive days, tanks, weights, guide, all transfers, taxes, and snack on dive days, \$262.50 p.p., dbl. occ.

Manta Ray Bay Hotel / Yap Divers (800) DIVE-YAP, (011) 691-350-2300 web: www.mantaray.com Only PADI 5-star facility, only nitrox and largest fleet of dive boats (7) in Yap. Experienced dive guides. only BSAC resort dive centre in Micronesia. Manta Ray Bay Hotel is the only PADI Gold Palm Resort in Yap. Bill Acker, owner and founder, teaches the only manta awareness course in the world. Hotel, restaurant, lounges and dive operation are all co-located. Dive boats just steps from personal gear storage area and rinse tanks.

pive with mantas...

Discover ancient culture.



For more information call (691) 350-2298 or log onto www.visityap.com or email yvb@mail.fm.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA When

you're on the 30-hour series of flights that take you to Papua New Guinea, remember this: the diving will be well worth the travel time. Located north of Australia in the confluence of major ocean currents from Japan, the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific and the Great Barrier Reef, the island nation is awash in an astounding mix of 900 species of fish and 400 species of coral that make it one of the hottest destinations on earth for underwater photographers.

BEST DIVES PNG is best suited to experienced divers who can handle remote locations, extreme depths and open-ocean conditions. Most diving revolves around pinnacles—submerged volcanic peaks now overgrown with colorful, healthy corals, but there are also big animal encounters and famous World War II wrecks.

WEATHER Tropical year-round; temps in the mid- to upper 80Fs. AVERAGE WATER TEMP Range from the mid-70Fs to mid-80Fs, depending on season.

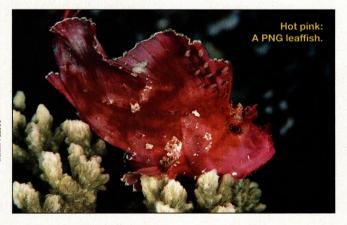
AVERAGE VISIBILITY 80 feet, with days of 150 to 200 feet from October to May.

TRAVEL SAVVY A valid passport is necessary for U.S. and Canadian travelers. You can get a 60-day tourist visa on arrival, but it's best to obtain one in advance from the PNG Embassy at (202) 745-3680 or at www.pngembassy.org. More than 700 different languages are spoken in PNG; luckily, English is widely spoken. Most divers fly into the capital of Port Moresby and take domestic flights on Air Niugini, the national carrier, to outlying dive regions.

DESTINATION LINKS Papua New Guinea Tourism at www.png tourism.org.

READER COMMENTS

J.P., MILWAUKEE, Wis.: "This place is a must for photographers. Great macro photos! I saw large numbers of fish life-small and large. The reefs are in excellent condition. I could dive for a month and still not see a fraction of what there is to see." J.J., OAKLAND, CALIF.: "I saw lots of good macro, as well as good bommie and wall dives." L.A., SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH: "I enjoyed the health and diversity of the invertebrates and hard coral. Fantastic experience." T.S., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.: "This is clearly the best dive area I have ever been to."



Aquaventures PNG (011) 675-852-2023 web: www.aquaventures-png.com We offer knowledge of the area and diversity of dive sites visited. See pelagics, wrecks, coral, muck and pretty fish. Close dive sites and some more remote and rarely visited.

Loloata Island Resort (011) 675-325-8590 web: www.loloata.com Vast variety of marine habitats, unique and rare fish and animals. Comfortable, fast dive boats with a maximum of 10 divers per boat.

Tufi Dive Resort (011) 675-320-1484 weh: www.tufidive.com ... Tufi is a houtique and exclusive resort. All bungalows fully airconditioned. The only access into Tufi is by air or sea, which creates a very pristine and safe eco-environment Tufi is located in the only fjord country in Papua New Guinea, an area of high bio-diversity. Full-service dive shop package: 7-day accommodations and dive package, 2 dives a day for 5 days, all meals, \$950. Valid May 1 through Oct. 31, 2003.

Walindi Plantation Resort (011) 675-983-5441 web: www.walindi.com Walindi is one of the few resorts that has access to the class of diving typically available only aboard live-aboards. Walindi's staff are hospitable and make you feel right at home. When it comes to the time of your departure you won't feel like you're ready to leave. Check our web site for the travel agents who arrange packages for

PUERTO RICO There's an island close to you with great diving, friendly people, constant sunshine, and it's just a "snack flight" away. You won't need to bring your passport or change your money, and the dive options include a little bit of everything from a fully penetrable wreck dive, to shallow reefs to a remote satellite island bristling with near-virgin reefs.

BEST DIVES That wreck dive we mentioned is the Witt Power, found off Culebra Island on the east shore. Mona Island, found off the west coast of Puerto Rico, is known as the "Galapagos of the Caribbean" for its stunning reefs and abundance of fish. On the southwest of the main island, explore the Black Wall, where dark coral trees and fans sway in 70 feet of water over the ocean depths. WEATHER Temperatures average 85F in the summer and 83F in the winter.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP 85F in the summer to a balmy 75F in the winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY About 60 to 80 feet—sometimes greater at offshore dive sites.

TRAVEL SAVVY Travel doesn't get any easier than this: No passport required, no currency exchange necessary—just remember to send a few postcards to your envious friends back home.

DESTINATION LINKS Puerto Rico Tourism Company at www.Goto puertorico.com.

READER COMMENTS

M.T., Burlington, Vt.: "The southwest corner of Puerto Rico offered three days of incredible diving. We were the only dive boat out on the water each day. I'm not sure why nobody else has caught on to this location." W.M., WEST NYACK, N.Y.: "Desecheo Island was great. There were a lot of fish, interesting coral formations, a lot of swim-throughs, 90-foot visibility, turtles, crabs, sea snakes and lobsters." B.C., GREENVILLE, N.C.: "The west coast of Puerto Rico is off the 'tourist trail.' We had an excellent dive experience." M.W., WEST JORDAN, UTAH: "Because Puerto Rico is a U.S. commonwealth, visitors can enjoy all of the

DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

comforts of home with a Latin flavor. Being able to travel to the Caribbean and not have to deal with currency exchanges and passports is great."

Aquatica Underwater Adventures

(787) 890-6071 web: www.aquatica.cjb.net Professionalism, vast knowledge of the area. package: Two-tank trips depart 8:30 a.m. and return by 1 p.m., \$65, includes air, weights, snacks and beverages on board. We usually go to a snorkel site between dives.

Arecibo Dive Shop (787) 880-DIVE email: aredive@cogui.net

Blue Caribe Dive Center (787) 741-

2522 web: www.divevieques.com package: Two-tank trips depart 9 a.m. and return 12 n m \$70

Caribe Aquatic Adventures (787) 724-1882 web: www.diveguide.com/ p2046.htm The only local diving in San Juan, where seahorses are often found. We have four dives daily off our beach, and only take out groups of one to four divers. All dives are escorted by either Karen or Tony (the owners and guides since 1982). Especially convenient for those with limited time for diving. package: Our Island Diving Picnic trip-1-day excursion to the island of Palominitos includes transfer from San Juan to Fajardo, sea transportation, 2 boat dives, snorkeling, equipment, lunch and soft drinks, \$135, divers; \$85, nondivers. Advance reservations required.

Culebra Divers (787) 742-0803 web: www.culebradivers.com We are a small company and we love to dive. We take out small groups (maximum 6 divers). Professional photographer on staff. package: Daily dive trips from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2 dives including tanks and weights, \$85. Rental package is \$15.

Dive Copamarina (800) 468-4553, (787) 821-0505 web: www.copamarina.com package: All-inclusive packages, as well as other packages available.

La Casa Del Mar (800) 468-5228, (787) 860-3483 web: www.lacsadelmar.net Quality and service sets us apart. Located at El Conquistador Hotel. Full-service PADI resort. Marina and boat are within walking distance of the rooms. Brand-new Scubapro equipment and 46-foot Newton dive boats. Snorkeling tours. package: Package dives in Culebra, Viegues and Fajardo area. 6 dives, tanks,

weights lunch and drinks, \$250. Valid until Dec. 1, 2003. Hotel packages also available.

Mundo Submarino, Inc. (787) 791-5764 web: www.mundosubmarino.net Professionalism and commitment for 28 years. package: Full-day trip with 2 boat dives to the islands of Culebra or Vieques, including all equipment needed, transportation to the marina on east side of the island and back to San Juan, cold drinks and a light lunch on board, \$150 p.p.

Paradise Scuba and Snorkeling

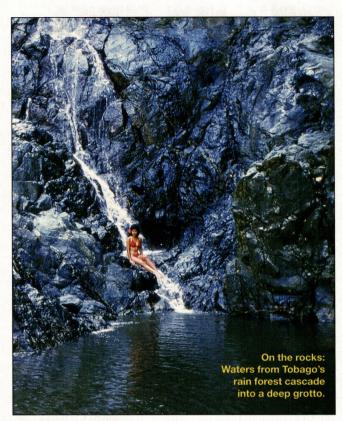
Center (787) 899-7611 Daily wall diving. sunset trip includes snorkeling and sightseeing Parguera reefs and ending at our beautiful Bioluminescence Bay, package: 3 nights, 3 days of two-tank diving, \$375 p.p., dbl. occ., includes tanks, weights, light lunch and soft drinks on hoard

Parquera Divers Puerto Rico

(787) 899-4171 web: www.pargueradivers.com We cater to small groups, so we can provide the best personalized service and highest safety, without forgetting to have fun. We are the only dive shop in the area that is located inside the premises of a waterfront inn. package: Dive packages start as little as \$302 p.p. for 3 nights and 4 dives and include welcome drink, breakfast every morning, a \$25 voucher per person for dinner at the hotel restaurant, room tax, tanks, weights, snacks and refreshments.

Sea Ventures Pro Dive Center (800) 739-3483, (787) 863-DIVE web: www.divepuertorico.com PADI 5-star IDC center with over nine years of experience providing great diving throughout the Spanish Virgin Islands. We offer PADI certification classes through instructor development courses. Foremost in dive excursions with up to three trips daily, equipment sales and service. package: Package for diving including hotel accommodations are negotiable. Check web site or call.

The Dive Shop (787) 833-6455 web: www.diveshop-pr.com package: Trips to local reefs depart at 8 a.m., \$65 p.p.; Desecheo Island trips, \$85 p.p. Rates include 2 tanks, weight and snacks.



TOBAGO Prepare yourself for a wild ride when you dive the reefs of Tobago. That's wild, as in healthy reefs and marine life ranging from tiny tropical fish to massive manta rays, and ride, as in drift diving. This hidden gem of an island has been compared to a boulder in the middle of a swift river; in this case, the river is the Guyana Current, which flows along the South American coast and hits Tobago's Atlantic shore. The water then shoots around the northern and southern tips of the island offering safe excitement for drift divers of all skill levels.

BEST DIVES Off the town of Speyside, Bookends is a great drift dive marked by twin peaks of black rock and a rich reef slope of hard and soft corals. From Charlotteville, you're just a short boat ride from London Bridge, a deepwater pinnacle topped with a picturesque arch. Staying in Crown Point, don't miss The Scarlett Ibis, an old inter-island ferry sunk as an artificial reef.

WEATHER Offshore trade winds keep the temperature in the mid-80Fs year-round.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP About 80F in summer, dropping to between 68F and 71F in winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY About 80 feet, though it can be lower during the June-to-October rainy season.

TRAVEL SAVVY U.S. and Canadian citizens will need a passport and a return ticket to get into Tobago.

DESTINATION LINKS Trinidad and Tobago Tourism at www.visitTNT.com.

INTERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

READER COMMENTS

A.C., DALY CITY, CALIF.: "I liked the laid-back attitude of the dive groups and the island itself. It was a beautiful place as a whole." J.B., LISBON, MD.: "We dove at Speyside and it was spectacular. I would dive there again."

Aqua Marine Dive (868) 660-5445 web: www.aquamarinedive.com ■ A PADI Gold Palm facility located on premises of hotel. Covered dive boats. Quarterly dive air checks. Only facility with private dock. Follow safe diving standards and procedures. Member of the Association of Tobago Dive Operators. package: 7 nights at the Blue Waters Inn in standard ocean-view room, 5 days diving, breakfast, transfers and taxes, \$675 p.p., dbl. occ. Valid to Nov. 15. 2003.

Manta Dive Center, Ltd. (868) 639-9209/9969 web: www.mantadive.com ■ Biggest dive boat and the best prices in Tobago. Dive safari with overnighting and shark diving. We dive all around Tobago and parts of Trinidad, as well as other Caribbean islands. Member of the Association of Tobago Dive Operators. package: 10-dive package, 7 days in Tobago, including breakfast and dinner, \$670 p.p.

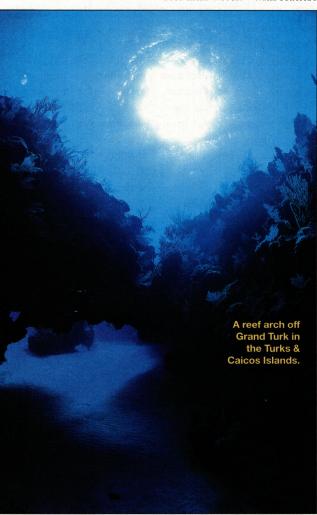
Proscuba Dive Centre (888) 322-3483, (868) 639-7424 web: www.diveguide. com/proscuba ■ Only dive center on Tobago that offers marine biology seminars. Free introduction on request. Member of the Association of Tobago Dive Operators. package: 7 nights at Surf Side Hotel, 10 boat dives, airport transfers, refreshments on boat, lunch on 5 diving days, equipment storage facility, \$500 p.p., dbl. occ.

R&Sea Divers (868) 639-8120 web:
www.rseadivers.com ■ Locally owned and
operated with 17 years diving experience.
Caribbean atmosphere with international standards. When you dive with us all you do is
dive. We take care of the rest—rinsing gear,
carrying gear, etc. Member of the Association
of Tobago Dive Operators. package: 10 boat
dives, 7 nights stay and breakfast, \$670.

Tobago Dive Masters (868) 639-4697 web: www.tobagodivemasters.com ■ Member of the Association of Tobago Dive Operators.

Wild Turtle Dive Safari (868) 639-7936 web: www.wildturtledive.com We offer personal service and cater to small groups only. package: \$28 per dive when you stay at the Palms Villa Resort.

World of Watersports
Caribbean Limited (866) 486-2246,
(868) 660-7234 web: www.worldofwater
sports.com We own the fastest custom-built
boat on the island. We are also the biggest
watersports facility on the island, and our service is second to none. We are a PADI 5-star
Gold Palm Instructor Development Center.
Member of the Association of Tobago Dive
Operators. package: Two-tank dives, \$83.



TURKS & CAICOS There are more

popular wall-diving destinations in the Caribbean, but a secret clan of divers in the know are drawn to the Turks & Caicos. The punctuation at the end of the rambling Bahamas chain, the islands—including beachy Provo, quiet Grand Turk and silent Salt Cay—offer steep, coral- and sponge-covered drop-offs, great visibility and some excellent chances to spot pelagic fish. Most Grand Turk wall dives are five to 10 minutes from shore, but you have fewer choices of dive operators. Trips to Provo's popular sites, including West Caicos and Northwest Point, can burn a good chunk of the day, but there are more dive operations to choose from. Live-aboards should also be considered, as they allow you to sample the best of all the islands.

BEST DIVES Dive operators make the hour-long trip to walls off West Caicos daily, and for good reason—they're steep, they're colorful and they're fishy. Just a wetsuit-donning from shore, The Library off Grand Turk is a sheer drop-off where glimpses of jacks and mantas are possible. The *HMS Endymion*, an hour south of Salt Cay, is an 18th-century English warship that's more reef than wreck—with scattered cannons, anchors, ballast stones

and bronze pins in just 30 feet of water. If you travel in June, make sure to attend the Conch Carnival from June 11 to 14 in Grand Turk.

WEATHER It's relatively dry and mild year-round, with average daytime temps ranging from highs around 90F in summer to lows in the mid-70Fs in winter.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP From the low to mid-80Fs in summer to the mid- to high 70Fs in winter

AVERAGE VISIBILITY Generally excellent; it averages 100 feet year-round. Occasional plankton blooms can drop visibility to double digits.

TRAVEL SAVVY Provo is the best bet if you need shopping, beaches, restaurants and any kind of night life; Grand Turk if you want short boat rides; Salt Cay, South Caicos or practically any other island if you want to get away from it

DESTINATION LINKS Turks & Caicos Tourist Board at www. turksandcaicostourism.com.

TURKS & CAICOS

ERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

READER COMMENTS

GRAND TURK/SALT CAY J.P., VERONA, Wis.: "I liked the visibility, versatile dive sites and the climate of the island ... I also enjoyed the people that live there, who are friendly and quick with a hello or a wave. I felt very comfortable walking around by myself." J.S., JULIAETTA, IDAHO: "There are lots of adult fish and lots of species. Most of the diving and fish are at 35 to 50 feet."

PROVIDENCIALES L.B., WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass.: "The walls are quite goodclear drop-offs and lots of healthy marine life. Because the walls on West Caicos and French Cay start at 50 feet, it's hard to get a long second dive in. You run out of time long before air." R.H., BLOOMINGTON, IND.: "It was an incredible experience when four dolphins approached us under water ... I saw big, beautiful blacktip reef sharks in West Caicos." A.P., Key Biscayne, Fla.: "It's always perfect. The scuba diving is phenomenal. The land life is 'island life.' Provo ponies are an excellent way to spend your day away from the water."

GRAND TURK AND SALT CAY

Blue Water Divers (649) 946-2432 web: www.grandturkscuba.com Only dive shop with over 20 years local experience, dedicated divernasters, emphasis on marine education and marine ecology. Free fish ID and slide shows. Grand Turk's only PADI Gold Palm IDC facility. package: 7 nights hotel, 6 days of diving, airport transfers, government tax, welcome drink, two dives daily and unlimited beach dives, \$837 p.p., dbl. occ.

Cecil Ingham's Sea Eye Diving of Grand Turk (800) 786-0669, (649) 946-1407 web: www.seaeyediving.com Photo pro, camera lab, E-6 processing and underwater scooter rentals. PADI, NAUI and SSI; Universal Referral. Whale-watching in season, package: 5 nights at Turks Head Inn. 4 days of diving (8 dives), continental breakfast daily, unlimited shore diving, government bed tax, airport transfers, welcome cocktail, \$552.50 p.p., dbl. occ. Valid for entire season 2003.

Oasis Divers / Grand Turk (800) 892-3995, (649) 946-1128 web: www.oasis divers.com Full-service gear handling and set-up with towels and refreshments onboard. Small, intimate groups. Grand Turk's only rebreather facility. package: 7 nights accommodations at the Island House, 6 days of diving, three tanks per day, unlimited shore diving, vehicle included, full kitchen, \$985 p.p., from June 1 to Dec. 20, 2002. Two dives per day is \$796 for Rodale's Scuba Diving readers only. Packages include tax, airport transfers and unlimited shore diving.

Salt Cay Divers (649) 946-6906 web: www.saltcaydivers.tc Family and junior open-water certifications. Rangers and Snuba available for children. A divemaster on every dive who allows you to dive your own profile. We offer total gear handling, small numbers and personalized service, package: 7 nights accommodations at the Tradewinds Guest Suites, 6 days of boat diving (15 tanks total), unlimited shore diving, night dives, trips to both Grand Turk and Salt Cav's walls, trips to 18th century British warship, land transfers and all taxes included, \$799 p.p., dbl. occ., April 1 to Dec. 14, 2003.

PROVIDENCIALES

Big Blue Unlimited (800) 743-2645, (649) 946-5034 web: www.bigblue.tc Divers are actively encouraged to plan their own dives with computers with no depth/time restrictions. We visit undiscovered dive sites, make drift dives and are the only nitrox and rebreather facility on the island. PADI, IANTD, TDI, SSI and BSAC-affiliated. Our instructors are the most experienced divernasters on the islands.

Dive Provo (800) 234-7768, (649) 946-5029 web: www.diveprovo.com ■ Our itinerary of trips is probably the most comprehensive on island, with daily two-tank and onetank afternoon dives. Night dives every Wednesday. Visit remote West Caicos and French Cay or enjoy the diving at Grace Bay and Pine Cay. package: 7 nights accommodations at the Comfort Suites Hotel with 6 days of two-tank dives, includes all hotel taxes and continental breakfast daily, \$868 p.p., dbl. occ. Rate valid from April 6 until Dec. 20, 2003.

Flamingo Divers (800) 204-9282, (649) 946-4193 web: www.flamingo divers.com Small, intimate groups; maximum of eight divers. Two instructors per boat. Gear set-up, breakdown and cleaning by our staff. Fast hoats to wall diving at French Cav. West Caicos, Northwest Point and Southwest Reef, nackage: With a minimum of 10 or more divers, 7 nights accommodations in dormstyle rooms, 5-days of two-tank dives, including tanks, weights and weight belts, \$695 p.p. **Vibes** Scuba & Watersports Ltd. (649) 231-6636 web: www.oceanvibes.com Provo's only nativeowned and operated, full-service dive shop. We offer PADI and NAUI certifications and universal referrals. Small groups; maximum of six and 10 divers per boat. Unlimited bottom time for computer divers, extended surface intervals, and lunch and drinks on all trips. package: Kray-Z Summer Explosion-7 nights accommodations at Ocean Vibes & Treasure Beach Resort in fully equipped two-bedroom beachfront villa, 5 days of two-tank dives, \$694 p.p., quad. occ.; package upgrades available. All packages must be pre-booked through Ocean Vibes; some restrictions apply. Provo Turtle Divers (800) 833-1341, (649) 946-4232 web: www.provoturtle divers.com Oldest dive operation in the Turks & Caicos, 30 years of experience and knowledge of the waters and dive sites around Provo, West Caicos and French Cay. Very personalized service. package: Group Special with Turtle Cove Inn-10 paying divers, 2 stay and dive free. Check web site for rates. Valid April 15 through Dec. 20, 2003.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS The flag

flying over the islands of St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix is Old Glory, but the warm trade wind snapping it to attention is as West Indian as peas and rice. In fact, everywhere you look in the U.S. Virgin Islands, you see a mix of island ambience with U.S. convenience and security. Your underwater options in this U.S. Trust Territory range from shallow patch reefs to some of the deepest wall diving anywhere.

BEST DIVES From St. Thomas, don't miss Cow and Calf Rocks, a maze of tunnels, swim-through archways and caves painted in encrusting sponges. Advanced divers will love Sail Rock, a trio of current-swept pinnacles swarmed by schooling horse-eye jacks. On St. John, divers of all skill levels love Congo Cay, where topside cliffs plunge into the water, then break up into a sloping boulder field that is covered with hard and soft corals. Keep your eyes open for hawksbill turtles and spotted eagle rays. Wall divers rejoice in the numerous deep dives of St. Croix, including Salt River Canyon, where a submerged river canyon intersects the north shore wall.

AVERAGE WATER TEMP Mid-80Fs in summer, dropping to the upper 70Fs in winter.

AVERAGE VISIBILITY 60 and 100 feet.

TRAVEL SAVVY Because the islands are a U.S. territory, there are no customs or immigration lines when you arrive from the U.S. mainland. However, bring your passport (or birth certificate and a valid driver's license) to prove citizenship before boarding the return flight.

DESTINATION LINKS U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism at www.usvitourism.vi.

ST. CROIX

Anchor Dive Center (800) 532-3483, (340) 778-1522 web: www.anchordivest croix.com PADI Gold Palm Resort with three locations that offer north and south shore boat dives, five-minute boat rides to the walls and other sites and surface intervals on shore. We cater to small groups. package: 7 nights at Divi Carina Bay Resort, round-trip air from anywhere in U.S. or Canada, airport transfers, 3 days of diving (6 dives), Buck Island snorkel trip, Salt River National Park & Ecological Preserve kayak tour, \$20 casino chip, daily breakfast, dinner buffets Monday and Wednesday, \$1,350.50 p.p., dbl. occ.; airport tax and \$35 hotel tax not included.

Cane Bay Dive Shop (800) 338-3843, (340) 773-9913 web: www.canebayscuba.com

Offer private boat dives; all boat dives are a maximum of 10-minute rides. We offer nitrox and rebreathers. The wall is 100 yards from shore for great shore diving. package: Great Dive the Wall package—5 nights, 6-tank package with unlimited air for unguided shore dives, \$499.

Dive Experience (800) 235-9047, (340) 773-3307 web: www.st-croix.com The first PADI 5-star IDC center on St. Croix. 19-year-old business with original owner. package: 7 nights stay at the Danish Manor hotel (includes all taxes and surcharges), 6 two-tank morning dives (includes tanks and weights), gear stored in locker near boat and rinse area, \$490 p.p., dbl. occ.

Scuba Shack (877) 772-DIVE, (340) 772-DIVE web: www.stcroixscubashack.com
Calm waters, on-site parking, wreck diving and 14 years actively working with coral reef ecologists. package: 7-day dive package includes two dives a day for \$435; 5-day dive package includes two dives a day for \$325.

One night dive can be substituted for 1 twotank boat dive.

The Waves at Cane Bay (800) 545-0603, (340) 778-1805 web: www.canebayst

St. Croix Ultimate Bluewater Adventures (SCUBA) (877) 567-1367, (340) 773-5994 web: www.stcroixscu ba.com Highly personalized service from an award-winning dive staff (#1 in the world, according to Rodale's Scuba Diving's "Top 100" Readers' Choice 2003 Awards). package: 5 nights in a pool-view room at Carrington's Inn, complimentary breakfast, 3 days of diving (6 dives total), \$527, p.p., dbl. occ., valid from May 1 until Dec. 14, 2003.

ST. JOHN

Cruz Bay Watersports Co. (340) 776-6234 web: www.divestjohn.com Been in

business for 21 years. We provide dives 365 days a year, 3 boats and more instructors than anyone in the USVIs. **package:** 5 days of two-tank diving (10 dives), excluding the *Rhone*, \$325, includes gear.

Low Key Watersports (800) 835-7718, (340) 693-8999 web: www.divelowkey.com ■ Only PADI 5-star IDC facility on St. John. Personalized attention. Only dive shop on St. John that dives the *RMS Rhone* (Wednesdays only), \$145 p.p. package: 7 nights in luxury villa, beautiful ocean views, commercial kitchen, pool and 6 tanks of diving, \$1,250 p.p. Valid from April 1 until Nov. 30, 2003.

ST. THOMAS

Admiralty Dive Center (888) 900-3483, (340) 777-9802 web: www.admiralty dive.com ■ We are a small, service-conscious operation. With over 80 reef sites and 17 wrecks, we have the perfect dive for you. We offer pick-up and drop-off from the cruise ship docks by boat. Full-service to divers—we keep your equipment, rinse it, hang it to dry and have it ready for your next dive. Ask about our extreme blue-water trips. package: Summer special—7 nights, 5 days of two-tank dives, free night dive or Hard Rock certificate, ground transportation, \$630 p.p., dbl. occ.

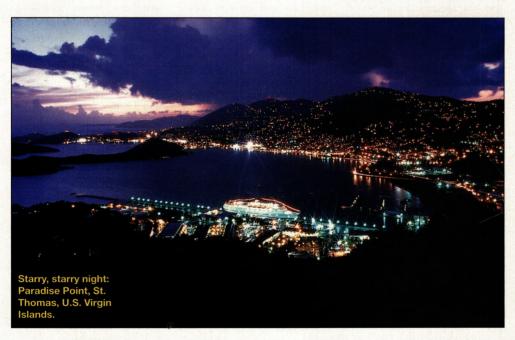
Chris Sawyer Diving Center (877) 929-3483, (340) 775-7320 **web:** www.sawyer

dive.vi • We tailor our dives to ensure plenty of personal attention. Fresh fruit, beverages and a freshwater shower, plus a large dry/shade area and an onboard head make for a comfortable day. Many of our instructors have been with us more than 12 years. In business more than 20 years. package: Try our 6 or 10 dive passes, which include all dive gear, even a wetsuit. For dive and hotel packages, check our web site for choices.

Coki Beach Dive Club (800) 474-COKI, (340) 775-4220 web: www.cokidive. com ■ We specialize in small groups and personalized service, plus our location is ideal for dive training. We rent full gear to both divers and snorkelers and offer underwater tours with experienced divemasters. The reefs are less than 100 yards from shore. package: Discover Scuba Diving, \$55 (equipment included); guided certified tour. \$35 (equipment included).

Dive In! (866) 434-8346, (340) 777-5255
web: www.diveinusvi.com ■ Relaxed and friendly staff, uncrowded trips, extensive dive site selection, and snacks and refreshments served onboard. Offer free pick-up and dropoff from east end resorts

St. Thomas Diving Club (340) 776-2381 web: www.st-thomasdivingclub.com Variety of dive sites, reef, wreck, wrecks (new and old), caves, ledges all within 20 minutes of the property. package: \$75 p.p., with 20 percent off any pre-paid dive package.





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TERNATIONAL DIVE TRAVEL DIRECTORY

ANTARCTICA & ARCTIC OCEAN

Grigoriv Mikheev / Oceanwide Expeditions (800) 453-7245, (281) 987-9600 web: www.ocnwide.com specs: 210 feet, 46 passengers with maximum 24 divers, 23 cabins, cruise area: Antarctic Peninsula and the Polar Circle. package: Antarctica diving, 11 nights in January and February 2004, from \$5,490 per diver. Includes meals, diving, land excursions, accommodations, coffee and tea.

Professor Molchanov Oceanwide Expeditions (800) 453-7245, (281) 987-9600 web: www. ocnwide.com specs: 236 feet, 52 passengers with a maximum of 22 divers, 26 cabins. cruise area: Spitsbergen/Norwegian Arctic. package: 7 nights dive package in June and July 2003, from \$1,840 p.p. for triple occ. Includes diving, meals, accommodations, land excursions, coffee and tea.

AUSTRALIA Great Barrier Reef & Coral Sea

Elizabeth E. Coral Cruises (011) 617-49-574281 web: www.elizabethe.com.au specs: 108 feet, 14 to 22 passengers, 13 cabins. cruise area: Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea. Visit sites rarely visited by other operators, package: Whole boat charter (groups of 14 to 22) for 7 to 14 days to the Great Barrier Reef and/or Coral Sea, Includes all meals, snacks, accommodations, weights, tanks, air fills, day and night dives, twin-berth, air-conditioned cabins with private shower and toilet, and unlimited fresh water. Great Barrier Reef from \$280 p.p., per day. Coral Sea from

Mike Ball Dive Expeditions / **Spoilsport** (800) 952 4319, (011) 617-40-530500 web: www.mikeball.com specs: 100 feet, 29 passengers, 15 double/twin cabins with private or share bathrooms. cruise area: Outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea. A prestigious and comfortable live-aboard with itineraries suitable for the adventurous diver.

\$340 p.p. per day.

Mike Bail Dive Expeditions / Supersport (800) 952-4319, (011) 617-40-530500 web: www.mikeball.com specs: 90 feet, 26 passengers, 13 twin/double cabins. cruise area: Cod Hole and Ribbon Reefs. Large, spacious and well-appointed liveaboard. Spectacular low-level reef flight from Lizard Island to increase your dive time.

M/V Nimrod Explorer (800) 322-3577, (903) 887-8521 web: www.explorerven tures.com specs: 72 feet, 18 passengers, 6 cabins. cruise area: Ribbon Reefs, Far Northern reefs and Coral Sea. Comfortable accommodations with private baths, and family-style customer service, package: 4 to 11 days, from Cairns to Cooktown and the Far North, all meals and 4 to 5 dives daily, from

MV Tusa IV / Tusa Dive Connection (011) 617-40-406464 web: www.tusadive.com specs: 72 feet, 14 passengers, 6 cabins, cruise area; Far Northern Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea, including Flinders, Holmes and Osprey. Chef-prepared meals and comfortable air-conditioned cabins. We go to remote locations.

Pro Dive Cairns (800) 353-213, (011) 617-40-315-255 web: www.prodivecairns.com.au specs: 80 feet, 32 passengers, 16 cabins, package: 3 days, 2 nights, for certified divers or snorkelers, departs Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, Includes accommodations, transfers (city and northern beaches), 2 nights onboard in twin cabins, up to 16 sites, all meals, bed linens, dive equipment (including computer), prescription mask if needed, wetsuit, marine biology presentation, comprehensive dive insurance, reef taxes, guided snorkel tours, \$520 for divers: \$430 for snorkelers.

Taka II Dive Adventures (011) 617-40-518722 weh: www.taka.com.au snecs: 77 feet, 27 passengers, 12 cabins, cruise area: Northern Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea's Osprey Reef. Well-maintained and reliable. package: 5-day, 4-night Cod Hole and Osprey Reef trip, departs every Friday, 14 dives, meals and transfers, from approx. US\$550 p.p.

Undersea Explorer (011) 617-40-995911 web: www.undersea.com.au specs: 75 feet, 20 passengers, 10 cabins. cruise area: Coral Sea's Osprey Reef, Ribbon Reefs and Great Barrier Reef's Cod Hole. Far Northern reefs in November and December. Each expedition has a research focus. package: 6-day expedition, including 20 to 22 dives on Osprey Reef and Ribbon Reefs on the GBR and at Cod Hole, air-conditioned cabins, tanks, weights, air fills, chef-prepared meals, presentations,

AU\$2,450 p.p., twin share.

AUSTRALIA South Australia

Serica Dive Charters (011) 617-40-421891078 web: www.sericadiveaustralia.com specs: 74 feet, 6 passengers, 3 cabins. cruise area: Far Northern Great Barrier Reef from Portland Roads to Ashmore Reef, Ribbon Reefs. More than 20 years experience. package: 10 nights, Far Northern Great Barrier Reef, September to December, \$3,400 p.p. Includes unlimited diving, meals, bar, charter flight, 4wheel-drive transfer through Outback. Between June and August, focus is on minke whales.

BAHAMAS Bimini

Blackbeard's Cruises (800) 327-9600, (305) 888-1226 web: www.blackbeardcruises.com specs: 65 feet, 22 passengers. 4 cabin areas, cruise area: Bimini, Berry Islands and Grand Bahama. Best value in liveaboard diving. Departures from Miami. package: Blackbeard's 3 live-aboards (Sea Explorer, Morning Star and Pirate's Lady) cruise each Saturday for a 7-day, 6-night, allinclusive cruise with 3 to 4 dives per day, all meals, beverages/bar, \$819 p.p.

Paradise Charters, Inc. (954) 524-8717 web: www.paradisecharters.com specs: 62 feet, 6 passengers, 5 cabins, cruise area: Northern Bahamas-Grand Bahama, Abacos, Bimini/Cat Cay, Orange Cay and Andros. Custom-built dive boat. PADI instructor guides all dives. package: Weeklong trip to Bimini and surrounding islands, \$1,299, including meals, snacks, fresh fruit, beverages, and beer or wine with dinner.

BAHAMAS Cay Sal Bank

Nekton Diving Cruises / Pilot (800) 899-6753, (954) 463-9324 web: www.nekton cruises.com specs: 78 feet, 32 passengers, 16 cabins. cruise area: Cay Sal Bank, Northwestern Bahamas. Super-stable SWATH vessel: spacious, air-conditioned, private cabins with picture windows, bath and shower; E-6 film processing, package: 7 nights accommodations, 6 full days of diving, all meals, snacks, nonalcoholic beverages, ground transfers, diving, tanks and weights. Bahamas/Ft. Lauderdale departure, \$1,495-\$1,695.

Nekton Diving Cruises / Rorqual

(800) 899-6753, (954) 463-9324 web: www.nektoncruises.com specs: 78 feet, 34 passengers, 17 cabins, cruise area: Cav Sal Bank, Cay Lobos, Southern Bahamas (Rum Cay, Conception Island, San Salvador). Super-stable SWATH vessel; spacious, air-conditioned, private cabins with picture windows, bath and shower; E-6 film processing. package: 7 nights accommodations, 6 full days of diving, all meals, snacks, nonalcoholic beverages, diving, ground transfers, tanks and weights. Bahamas/Ft. Lauderdale departure, \$1,495-\$1,795; Southern Bahamas, \$1,295-\$1,595.

Sea Fever Diving Cruises (800) (800) 443-3837 443-3837. web: www.seafever.com = specs: 100 feet, 16 passengers 7 cabins cruise area: Bahamas In the Bahamas for over 20 years. Unlimited diving your way. package: 7 days, 6 nights, allinclusive, accommodations, meals, diving, weights and tanks. Fall and winter, from \$1,099 p.p., dbl. occ.; spring and summer, from \$1,299 p.p., dbl. occ.

BAHAMAS Exumas

Aqua Cat Cruises (888) 327-9600, (305) 888-3002 web: www.aguacatcruises.com specs: 102 feet, 22 passengers, 11 cabins. cruise area: Exuma Cavs and Eleuthera, an area accessible only by boat or seaplane. Immense amount of space, whether you're in a private cabin, on the sundeck or on the dive deck. package: 8 days, 7 nights, includes 4 to 5 dives per day, all meals, beverages, bar, transfers and other activities, \$1,695 p.p., dbl. occ.

Cat Ppalu Cruises (800) 327-9600, (305) 888-1226 web: www.catppalu.com specs: 65-foot sailing catamaran, 12 passengers, 6 cabins, cruise area: Exuma Cavs and Eleuthera. Perfect for small groups looking for a private vacht, package: 7-day, 6-night allinclusive rate for 12-passenger private charter is \$13,000. Rate includes diving, meals, beverages/bar, kayaking and fishing.

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Wind Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com specs: 120 feet, 20 passengers, 10 staterooms, cruise area: Southern Bahamas-Conception Island, Rum Cay and San Salvador, including Great Exuma. package: From June 7 until Aug. 2, 2003, weeklong packages are \$1,695, plus \$100 port charge.

Sea Dragon (954) 522-0161 web: www.seadragonbahamas.com specs: 70 feet, 8 or 9 passengers, 4 passenger cabins, 2 crew cabins. cruise area: Northern Exumas and the Exumas. Home-cooked meals with beverages and snacks. package: Exuma Cays, 6 days of diving, 7 nights onboard, all meals, diving, tanks, air, weights, belts, 3 to 5 dive sites per day and shore excursions, \$1,200 p.p., dbl. occ. 10 percent commission/discount for full charters. 9th person free.

BAHAMAS Grand Bahama

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Wind Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com specs: 120 feet, 20 passengers, 10 staterooms. cruise area: Northern Bahamas. Itineraries feature encounters with wild spotted and bottlenose dolphins, and diving on the Bahama Bank. package: From Aug. 2 until Sept. 6, 2003, weeklong packages are \$1,695, plus \$100 port charge.

BAHAMAS Out Islands

Jim Abernethy's Scuba Adventures, Inc. (888) 901-3483, (561) 842-6356 web: www.scuba-adventures.com specs: 65 feet, 12 passengers, 3 cabins. cruise area: Out Islands, from Walker's Cay to Plana Cay. Shark expeditions and dolphin encounters. package: 7 days, 6 nights, 5 days and nights of diving, accommodations, meals, snacks, refreshments, tanks, weights, 4 or 5 dives per day, snorkeling, fishing, shark dives and dolphin encounters, \$1,295 p.p., May to August 2003.

BELIZE **Belize City**

Belize Aggressor III (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com specs: 110 feet, 18 passengers, 9 cabins. cruise area: Turneffe, Lighthouse and Blue Hole, Diving Belize since 1987, We've added digital camera with housing and DVD player. Offer nitrox and rebreather diving. Family weeks. Central Belize eco-adventures by group request. package: 7-day cruise includes div-

ing, accommodations, meals, local alcohol, \$1,995 p.p., dbl. occ.

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Sun Dancer II (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com = specs: 138 feet, 20 passengers, 10 cabins. cruise area: Turneffe, Lighthouse Reef and the surrounding atolls and Half Moon Cay. package: Lowest weeklong package price, \$1,895, plus \$65 for port charge and \$15 recompression chamber fee.

Nekton Diving Cruises / Pilot (800) 899-6753, (954) 463-9324 web: www.nektoncruises.com specs: 78 feet, 32 passengers, 16 cabins. cruise area: Belize. Super-stable SWATH vessel; spacious, air-conditioned, private cabins with picture windows, bath and shower; E-6 film processing. package: 7 nights accommodations, 6 full days of diving, all meals, snacks, nonalcoholic beverages, diving, tanks, weights, ground transfers, tour of Altun Ha, Mayan ruin, \$1,295-\$1,595.

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Cuan Law (800) 648-3393, (284) 494-2490 web: www.bvidiving.com specs: 105 feet, 20 passengers, 10 cabins. cruise area: British Virgin Islands, Leeward and Windward islands. The world's largest motor sailing trimaran, with extraordinary stability and protection from strong side winds. package: 6 nights, includes chef-prepared meals, diving and watersports, up to 20 guests in 10 2-person, air-conditioned staterooms with private bathrooms, \$1,995 p.p. Half price for children in summer. Promenade Cruises, Ltd. (800) 526-5503, (284) 499-2756 web: www.yacht promenade.com specs: 65-foot sailing trimaran, 12 passengers, 6 cabins. cruise area: British Virgin Islands. Available throughout the Caribbean in summer. Casual diving complements sailing holiday. package: 7 nights, 8 days, up to 12 guests, includes all cuisine, bar, watersports and 2 dive instructors \$14,900 Sail Caribbean Divers / Yacht Charters (936) 560-6794 web: www.sail caribbeandivers.com specs: 50 feet, 8 passengers, 4 cabins, cruise area; Sir Francis Drake Channel and the British Virgin Islands. Our dive hoat travels in tandem with the sailhoat, allowing

divers to customize their dive itinerary.

SV Legacy and SV Flying Cloud / Windjammer Barefoot Cruises (800) 327-2601, (305) 672-6453 web: www.windiammer.com specs: 294 feet, 122 passengers, 61 cabins. cruise area: Caribbean and South America, Windiammer is the largest fleet of Tall Ships, with five ships. Six- and 13-day cruises. December is dive month. Great discounts for divers.

CALIFORNIA Channel Islands

Diving Charters, Inc. / Sand **Dollar** (877) 444-2628, (909) 279-3483 web: www.divingcharters.com or www. diving.net specs: 65 feet, 30 passengers, 3 berthing areas. cruise area: Southern California Channel Islands, San Clemente, Catalina, Santa Barbara. package: 2 days, meals, tanks and weights included, nitrox fills and rebreather fills available, 8 to 10 dives, \$259-\$289 p.p. (1-day, 3- and 4-day packages also available).

Great Escape Charters (866) 348-3262, (866) 348-3262 web: www.DiveBoat.com specs: 80 feet, 35 passengers, 6 cabins. cruise area: From Catalina to Cortez Banks. package: Bug Season Opener-4 days, includes all meals, dives, air and nonalcoholic beverages. \$495; 3-day limit (or 21 bugs).

Liberty (805) 642-6655 web: www.westcoastdiver.com/boats/ liberty/index.php3 specs: 85 feet, bunks. cruise area: Northern Channel Islands. Offer freshwater hot tub. TV and VCR, and sundeck. Peace (866) 984-2025 web: www.peaceboat.com specs: 65 feet, 32 passengers, bunkroom-style. cruise area: Northern and southern Channel Islands. package: Thursday special to Anacapa Island, 3 dives, food and nonalcoholic beverages included, \$70 p.p. Nitrox fills are available for extra fee.

Spectre and Explorer (866) CAL-DIVE. (805) 486-4486 web: www.calboatdiving.com specs: Spectre, 85 feet; Explorer, 65 feet, cruise area: Northern Channel Islands. package: Saturday to Sunday trips include 2 days diving and sleeping on boat, \$150 p.p.; food and air fills are an additional charge.

Truth Aquatics, inc. / Truth, Conception and Vision (805) 962-1127 web: www.truthaguatics.com specs: 65 feet, 75 feet, 80 feet; 30-40 passengers, 1 large bunkroom, cruise area: California coast and Channel Islands. package: 2- to 5-day vear-round dive trips including food and nonalcoholic beverages, \$144 p.p., per day.

CALIFORNIA San Diego area

Absolute Adventures / Shark Diver (877) 820-6589, (415) 664-7344 web: www.sharkdiver.com specs: 85 feet, 16 divers. cruise area: San Diego to Isla Guadalune, Mexico, Incentives like \$200 discounts for each diver and a free five-day trip. package: 1-day "Aerial Predation" white shark cage diving, to the Gulf of the Farallons islands, 27 miles off San Francisco (84 percent success rate), includes meals, \$250 (12- to 16hour day).

Horizon Charters (858) 277-7823 web: www.horizon charters.com specs: Horizon, 80 feet; Ocean Odyssey, 85 feet; 30 passengers. cruise area: Southern Channel Islands and Baia. Mexico's offshore islands. package: 3-day trip to the Southern Channel Islands, meals included, \$390 p.p. 7-day Baja, Mexico, scuba and free diving to San Benito Island, allinclusive except for beer and wine \$1,495 p.p.

CANADA **British Columbia**

Clavella Adventures (877) 725-2835, (250) 753-3751 web: www.clavella.com specs: 61 feet, 8 passengers, 4 cabins. cruise area: Port Hardy. Dive and whale-watching trips since 1980. package: 7 days, 6 nights, 4 dives a day, accommodations, great meals, whale-watching, beach hikes or scenic cruising between dives, from \$895 p.p.

Mamro Adventures (250) 756-8872 web: www.mamro.com specs: 52 feet, 7 passengers. cruise area: Port Hardy, Johnstone Strait, Sunshine Coast, Gulf Islands, Hornby Island.

Nautilus Explorer / Lever Diving (888) 4-DIVE-BC, (604) 657-7614 web: www.nautilusexplorer.com specs: 116 feet, 25 passengers, 11 cabins, plus dorm berths, cruise area: British Columbia, Alaska, Queen Charlotte Islands. All staterooms have full facilities, air-conditioning and window or porthole. package: 4-day weekend getaway, stateroom accommodations, \$685 p.p.

CAYMAN ISLANDS Grand Cayman

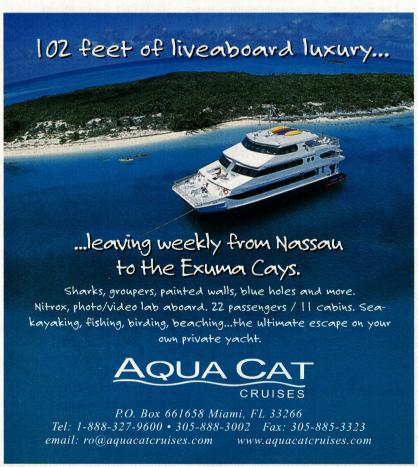
Cayman Aggressor IV (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com



Pirate's Lady, Sea Explorer, and Morning Star sail the crystal waters of the Bahamas on weekly dive/cruise adventures.

\$789 per week. Blackbeard's

P.O Box 66-1091, Miami, FI 33266, cruises Toll free (800) 327-9600 • (305) 888-1226 • Fax (305) 884-4214, http://www.blackbeard-cruises.com • e-mail: ro@blackbeard-cruises.com





specs: 110 feet, 18 passengers, 9 cabins. cruise area: Grand Cayman, Little Cayman, and Russian Destroyer off Cayman Brac, weather permitting. Diving Cayman since 1984, we are the most affordable way to dive all three islands. Family Week diving program. package: 7-day charter includes diving, meals, accommodations and local alcohol, \$1,795 p.p., twin cabin; \$1,995 p.p., deluxe cabin.

COSTA RICA Cocos Island

Okeanos Aggressor (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com = specs: 120 feet, 21 passengers, 10 cabins, cruise area: Cocos Island, Costa Rica, Experience in diving Cocos since 1988. package: 8-day packages start at \$2,495; 10-day packages start at \$2,895.

Sea Hunter (800) 203-2120, (011) 506-228-6613 web: www.underseahunter.com specs: 115 feet, 18 passengers, 6 double cabins and 2 triple cabins. cruise area: Cocos Island and Malpelo. All guest cabins with heads and showers.

Undersea Hunter (800) 203-2120, (011) 506-228-6613 web: www.under seahunter.com = specs: 90 feet, 14 passengers, 7 cabins. cruise area: Cocos Island. 12 years of experience diving Cocos. Superior levels of comfort and safety, fewer passengers, fiberglass skiffs, more deck space, nitrox (including course) and rebreather diving. package: 11-day/10-night Cocos trip, includes round-trip ground transfers between San Jose and Puntarenas, all meals and nonalcoholic drinks, divemaster, 7 days of 3 to 4 dives per day, tanks and weights, \$3,095, plus park fee.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Wind Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com specs: 120 feet, 20 passengers, 10 staterooms, cruise area: Silver Bank whale-watching trips. Swim with humpback whales on expeditions led by Capt. Tom Conlin. The Wind Dancer is in the DR from February until April.

EGYPT

Sol Y Mar Fortuna | and | I (011) 2027-354890 web: www.travcotels.com or www.solymar-hotels.com specs: 99 feet, 16 passengers, 8 cabins,

Camel Dive Club & Hotel / Virginia (011) 2069-600700 web: www.cameldive.com specs: 73 feet. cruise area: Egypt's Red Sea, Northern Route. Offers classic wreck safaris. Tornado Marine / MY Cyclone (011) 2062-661216 web: www.scubared sea.com specs: 100 feet, 20 passengers, 10 cabins. cruise area: Egyptian Red Sea.

Blue Lagoon Cruises & Westside Watersports (011) 679-6661622 web: www.bluelagooncruises.com specs: 160 feet, 52 passengers, 26 cabins. cruise area: Mamanuca and Yasawa Islands. The area we dive is not visited by other operators. package: Cruise and Dive-7 days, 6 nights, all diving (up to 15 dives), accommodations, all meals, activities, cultural experiences, US\$1,499 (divers), plus value-added tax; US\$999 (nondivers), plus value-added tax, twin share.

Fiji Aggressor II (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com specs: 101 feet, 10 passengers, 5 cabins.

*cruise area: E-6, Hi-8, Gau, Wakaya, Moturiki. An intimate boat with an experienced local captain and crew. Visits to local villages. package: 7-day charters August through December, \$2,195 p.p., dbl. occ.

Nai'a Cruises Fiji (866) 776-5572, (011) 679-345-0382 web: www.naia.com.fj specs: 120 feet, 16 passengers, 9 cabins.

*cruise area: Bligh Waters and Lomaiviti. We have the experience to show you Fiji's finest diving. package: 7- and 10-day charters, including value-added tax, transfers to and from Nadiarea hotels, 7-day charter, \$2,700; 10-day charter, \$3,850.

Sere-Ni-Wai (011) 679-3361171 web: www.sere.com.fj ■ specs: 101 feet, 10 passengers, 5 cabins. cruise area: Fiji. Longest established live-aboard in Fiji. package: 10 nights, all-inclusive, \$2,400.

FLORIDA KEYS Dry Tortugas

Playmate / Sea-Clusive Charters (305) 744-9928
web: www.seaclusive.com ■ specs: 60 feet, 11 passengers, 4
cabins. cruise area: Tortuga Banks.

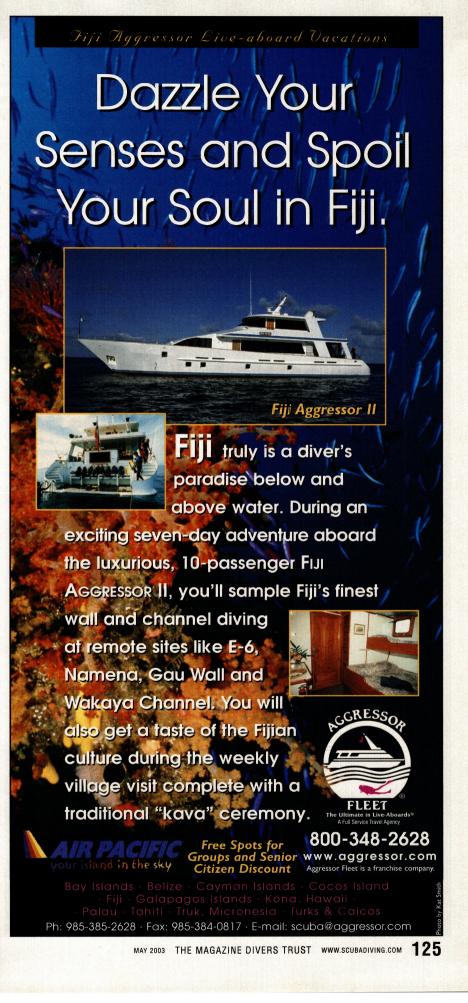
FRENCH POLYNESIA

Tahiti Aggressor (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com ■ specs: 106 feet, 18 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Tuamotu Atoll, Tahiti. Only live-aboard in Tuamotu Atoll. package: 7-day cruise includes diving, meals, accommodations, local alcohol and TDI drift diving course, \$2,395; \$2,195 p.p., dbl. occ.

GALAPAGOS

Galapagos Aggressor I and Galapagos Aggressor II (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com ■ specs: 95 feet, 14 passengers, 7 cabins. cruise area: Baltra, Seymour, Wolf and Darwin. We dive Wolf and Darwin every week. Diving Galapagos since 1993. package: 7-day package includes diving, meals, accommodations, local alcohol, from \$2,695 p.p., dbl. occ.

Lammer Law (800) 648-3393, (284) 494-2490 web: www.galapagosdiving.com ■ specs: 95 feet, 16 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Galapagos. Stable motor sailing trimaran with three hulls and a low side profile. Spacious salon and huge deck areas. package: 7 to 10 nights in 2-person, air-conditioned staterooms, twin or queen, en suite bathroom, all food, diving, 7 crew and 2 naturalist dive guides, land visits and kayaks, from \$2,340 p.p. Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Sky Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com ■ specs: 100 feet, 16 passengers, 8 staterooms. cruise area: Cousins Rocks, Caleta Tagus Cove, Punta Vicente Roca, the remote Wolf and Darwin islands, North Seymour and four or more excursions. package: 7 nights, \$2,695; 10 nights, \$3,795,



IVE-ABOARD

plus \$100 national park fee and \$35 recompression chamber fee.

GRENADA

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Island Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com specs: 87 feet, 12 passengers, 6 staterooms. cruise area: Explore the "Titanic of the Caribbean." Bianca C. package: Weeklong packages are \$1,595, plus \$85 port charges.

S/V Yankee Clipper / Windjammer Barefoot Cruises, Ltd. (800) 327-2601, (305) 672-6453 web:

www.windjammer.com specs: 179 feet, 64 passengers/crew. cruise area: Caribbean and South America. Windiammer is the largest fleet of Tall Ships, with five ships. Six- and 13-day cruises. December is dive month. Great discounts for divers.

HAWAII The Big Island of Hawaii

Kona Aggressor II (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com specs: 80 feet, 14 passengers, 6 cabins. cruise area: Kona coast, from Kailua-Kona to South Point. The only live-aboard diving the Big Island. New stateroom on upper deck. Nitrox and digital photo programs. package: 7day package includes diving, accommodations, meals and local alcohol, \$1,995 p.p., dbl. occ.; \$1,795 p.p., quad. occ.

HONDURAS Roatan, Bay Islands

Bay Islands Aggressor IV (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com specs: 120 feet, 20 passengers, 10 cabins. cruise area: Roatan, Utila, Cayos Cochinos, Guanaja. Family week program and Teen Week training program. Digital photo courses. package: 7-day cruise includes diving, accommodations, meals and local alcohol, \$1,295, \$1,495 p.p., dbl. occ.

INDONESIA

Dive Asia Pacific / M/Y Pelagian (800) 962-0395, (954) 229-8022 web: www.diveasiapacific.net ■ specs: 115 feet, 12 passengers, 6 cabins en suite. cruise area: Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Irian Jaya, Komodo, Rinca. Two charter expeditions to the Banda Sea in March and April 2003, led by Stan Waterman. Based in Bali, Indonesia, May through December.

MIMPI Dive Cruises (011) 62-41-850-230 web: www. mimpicruises.com specs: 70 feet, 8 passengers, 4 cabins. cruise area: Bunaken National Park, Bangka Archipelago, Lembeh Strait, Sangih Telaut Archipelago. package: 6 days, 5 nights to Bangka Archipelago and Lembeh Strait, unlimited diving, all-inclusive except alcoholic drinks, US\$750; 10 days to Sangih Archipelago and underwater volcano, all-inclusive, US\$1,500.

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Komodo Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com specs: 125 feet, 14 passengers, 7 staterooms. cruise area: Satonda Island (near Tambora volcano), GPS Point, Horseshoe Bay and Sangeang Island. Land walks, including Komodo Island to see Komodo dragons. package: 7 nights, \$1,845; 10 nights, \$2,545, plus \$90 national park fee.

PUERTO RICO

Nekton Diving Cruises / Rorqual (800) 899-6753, (954) 463-9324 web: www.nektoncruises.com ■ specs: 78 feet, 34 passengers, 17 cabins. cruise area: Mona Island. Super-stable SWATH vessel; spacious, air-conditioned private cabins, bath and shower; E-6 film processing. package: 7 nights accommodations, 6 full days of diving, all meals, snacks, nonalcoholic beverages, diving, tanks and weights, \$1,395-\$1,595.

MALDIVES

Maleesha Diving Cruiser (011) 960-316172 web: www.seamaldives.com.mv = specs: 110 feet, 20 passengers. cruise area: North and South Male atolls, Ari Atoll, Baa and Raa, Nilandhu and Vaavu atolls.

MALPELO ISLAND

Pisces Dive Center (011) 57-315-5558179 web:



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www.telesat.com.co/malpelo specs: 70 feet, 15 passengers, 7 cabins. cruise area: Diving with sharks at Gorgona and Malpelo islands (Pacific Colombia).

MEXICO Baia

Baja Expeditions, Inc. / Don Jose (800) 843-6967, (858) 581-3311 web: www.bajaex.com specs: 80 feet. 16 passengers, 7 cabins. cruise area: Between La Paz and Loreto. Knowledgeable and helpful crew. package: Weeklong trips June through November, unlimited diving, night dives, all meals onboard, above-deck, air-conditioned staterooms, \$1,445 p.p. (standard); \$1,645 p.p. (deluxe); dbl. and triple occ.

Solmar V (800) 344-3349, (310) 459-9861 **web**: www.so Imar.com specs: 112 feet, 22 passengers, 12 cabins. cruise area: Sea of Cortez and Socorro Islands. No other luxury live-aboards in our area. package: Sea of Cortez, 7 nights, 8 days, from \$1,995. plus tax. Socorro Islands, 8 nights, 9 days, from \$2,895, plus tax.

MICRONESIA Palau

Ocean Hunter (011) 680-488-2637 web: www.ocean hunter.com specs: 60 feet. 6 passengers. 4 cabins. cruise area: Palau. Unlimited diving from main boat. Same crew for the last four years. package: 7 days, gourmet food and unlimited diving, \$2,695 p.p.

Palau Aggressor II (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com specs: 106 feet, 18 passengers, 9 cabins. cruise area: Ulong Island, Jellyfish Lake, Blue Corner, Blue Holes and Peleliu. Diving Palau since 1993, we operate year-round. Thursday night candlelight dinner on sundeck. package: 7-day package includes diving, accommodations, meals and local alcohol, \$2,495 p.p., dbl. occ. (deluxe); \$2,295 p.p., dbl. occ. (double).

MICRONESIA Truk Lagoon (Chuuk)

Odyssey Adventures (800) 757-5396, (904) 346-3766 web: www.trukodyssey.com specs: 132 feet, 16 passengers, 9 cabins. cruise area: Truk Lagoon. Voted top liveaboard in the world three years in a row by Rodale's readers in "Top 100" Readers' Choice Awards. package: Sunday to Sunday cruises, 5.5 days diving, meals, beverages, nitrox and airport transfers \$2 295

Thorfinn / Seaward Holidays S.S. Micronesia, Inc. (011) 691-330-3040 web: www.thorfinn.net **specs**: 170 feet, 22 passengers, 12 cabins. cruise area: Truk Lagoon and virgin oceanic island atolls and reefs. Big sundeck spa. TV/VCRs in each private room and main lounge. package: Sunrise Specials for \$1,395 per week include 7 days of 5 dives per day, luxury accommodations, airport transfers and taxes. Onboard meal and beverage packages, including all meals, between-dive snacks, tea, coffee, cocoa, soft drinks, beer,



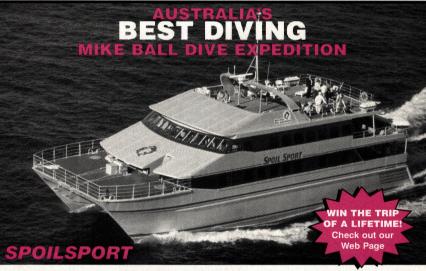
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Truk Aggressor II (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com specs: 107 feet, 18 passengers, 8 cabins.

cruise area: Truk Lagoon. Diving Truk since 1990. package: 7-day package includes diving, accommodations, meals and local alcohol, \$2,195 p.p., dbl. occ.; \$1,995 quad. occ.

PANAMA

MV Coral Star (800) 733-4742, (800) 215-5169 web: www.coralstar.com ■ specs: 115 feet, 16 passengers (average is 12), 2 master, 2 deluxe and 4 standard cabins. cruise area: Pacific side of Panama, including Coiba National Park. package: Includes 7 days, 6 nights in air-conditioned staterooms, 2-night stay at hotel in Panama City (first and last night), round-trip in country flight, 3 meals a day, hot showers, tanks, air fills, launch service to and from shore, port and park fees and more.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Aquaventures PNG, Ltd. (011) 675-8522023 web: aquaventures-png.com specs: 46 feet, 8 passengers, 4 cabins. cruise area: Bismark Sea. Newest, fastest boat in the area with 20 years experience of the area.

Blue Sea Charters / MV Moonlighting (011) 675-852-2300 web: www.blueseacharters.com specs: 100 feet, 12 passengers, 6 twin berth cabins. cruise area: Madang on north coast of PNG and islands to the north. Special trips south to Milne. package: Specially discounted offer of \$200 p.p., per night. Pay in full by July 31, 2003, for any charter until Dec. 31, 2003. Normal rate is \$280 per night. All cabins are fully air-conditioned twin berth with private en suite bathroom. Packages include meals, unlimited diving, tanks, weights, airport transfers. Groups of 6 or more earn 10 percent discount, groups of 8 or more get 1 diver free. Additional 5 percent discount for Rodale's Scuba Diving readers.

MV Golden Dawn / Dolphin

Enterprises (011) 675-325-6500 web:

www.mvgoldendawn.com ■ specs: 80 feet, 10
passengers, 5 cabins. cruise area: Most regions
of PNG. Crew with vessel since beginning operation 10 years ago. Offer several choices of
cruise destinations, rebreathers and nitrox.

Niugini Diving Adventures (011) 675-852-2766 web: www.mtspng.com specs: 132 feet, 23 passengers. cruise area: North coast of PNG. Luxury live-aboard, Melanesian Discoverer. package: Diving in Paradise—7 nights, 6 days of morning dives, 2 night dives, hotel and live-aboard accommodations, all meals, tours and 10 percent value-added tax, US\$1,000 p.p., minimum group of 12.

Mike Bail Dive Expeditions / Supersport (800) 952 4319, (011) 617-4053-0500 web: www.mikeball.com specs: 100 feet, 22 passengers, 11 ocean-view cabins, 9 en suite. cruise area: Dives from Milne Bay (September to April) and Kavieng (May to September). Luxury live-aboard. Spectacular marine life, World War II wrecks, sharks, underwater volcanic activity and trips to local villages.

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. /
Star Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 6699391 web: www.peterhughes.com ■ specs:
120 feet, 16 passengers, 8 staterooms. cruise
area: Departs from East New Britain Island.
Itineraries include Kimbe Bay, Fathers Reef,
Witu Islands and Lolobau Island. package: 7
nights, \$1,795; 10 nights, \$2,695, plus \$65
national park fee and recompression chamber
fee (7 nights, \$15; 10 nights, \$25).

Telita Cruises (011) 675-321-4210
specs: 66 feet, 10 twin cabins and one deluxe suite. cruise area: Tufi area, Trobiand and Ferguson islands, and Milne Bay. All cabins are air-conditioned and share bathrooms. A large entertainment, barbecue and bar area has been added.

SABA / ST. KITTS

M/V Caribbean Explorer II (800)
322-3577, (903) 887-8521 web: www.explor
erventures.com ■ specs: 110 feet, 18 passengers, 9 cabins. cruise area: Saba, St. Kitts, St.
Eustatius. The only live-aboard in the
Northeastern Caribbean. Excellent diving, spacious accommodations and family-style customer service. package: 7 nights, 8 days, from
\$1,395 p.p., includes meals, diving and
accommodations. \$250 savings per person
September-December.

SV Polynesia / Windjammer Barefoot Cruises (800) 327-2601, (305) 672-6453 web: www.windjammer.com ■ specs: 279 feet, 126 passengers. cruise area: Caribbean and South America. Windjammer is the largest fleet of Tall Ships, with five ships. Six- and 13-day cruises. December is dive month. Great discounts for divers.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

MV Bilikiki (800) 663-5363, (705) 363-2049 web: www.bilikiki.com ■ specs: 125 feet, 20 passengers, 10 cabins. cruise area: Florida Islands, Russell Islands and Mborokua. Consistently rated by our guests as one of the world's finest dive operations. package: April 22 to May 1, 2003 (9 nights), includes hotel or airport transfers in Honiara, onboard accommodations in deluxe air-conditioned double/twin share stateroom or cabin with private toilet facilities, all onboard meals and snacks, unlimited diving, use of weights, belt, tanks and air fills, government bed tax. \$2.259.

MV Spirit of Solomons (800) 663-5363, (705) 363-2049 web: www.bilikiki.com specs: 125 feet, 26 passengers, 13 cabins. cruise area: Florida Islands, Russell Islands and Mborokua. Consistently rated by our guests as one of the world's finest dive operations. package: 7 nights, includes hotel or airport transfers in Honiara, onboard accommodations in air-conditioned twin share cabins, all onboard meals and snacks, unlimited diving, use of weights, belt, tanks and air fills, government hed tax \$1.757

THAILAND

Aquasports Co., Ltd. (888) 996-2782, (888) 996-2782, (888) 996-2782 web: www.dive-aquas ports.com specs: 115 feet, 16 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Similan, Richilleu in Thailand; Mergui Archipelago in Myanmar in November until May; Komodo, Alor in Indonesia. package: 7 nights, private facility for all cabins, transfers to and from Phuket airport or hotel, all meals, soft drinks, coffee, tea, tanks, weights, weight belt and unlimited air refills, US\$2,160 p.p., dbl. occ.

DIVESIMILAN.com (011) 66-18-916-036 web: divesimilan.com cruise area: Similan, Surin, Richelieu Rock, Burma, Burma Banks, Hing Daeng, Hin Muang. We are the largest live-aboard diving fleet in the region.

Fantasea Divers - Ocean Rover Cruises (011) 66-76-281-338 web: www.ocean-rover.com ■ specs: 100 feet, 16

passengers, 8 cabins. **cruise area**: Andaman Sea: Thailand and Myanmar (Burma); Gulf of Thailand: Ko Samui and Ko Tau; East Coast Malaysia. New, comfortable boat. **package**: November to May Andaman Sea cruises, \$295 p.p., per day. June to October Gulf of Thailand cruises, \$215 p.p., per day. Includes all meals, snacks, 4 or 5 dives per day, tanks, weights and airport transfers.

High Class Adventure Phuket

(011) 66-76-292-622 web: www.highclass-adventure.com specs: 90 feet, 15 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Thailand and Burma. Personal service under water and above. package: 7 days, Burma and Thailand, US\$1,300. June Hong Chian Lee (011) 66-76-342-186 web: www.thejunk.com specs: 100 feet, 18 passengers, 6 cabins. cruise area: Similan Islands National Park, Koh Bon, Koh Tachai, Koh Surin. Chinese sailing junk. Airconditioned cabins have en suite bathrooms. package: 4 days, 5 nights to Similan Islands

and Richelieu Rock, all meals and unlimited

diving, \$900 p.p.

Kingfisher Diving Co., Ltd. (011) 66-76-340-625 web: www.kingfisherdiving. com specs: 66 feet, 12 passengers, 4 cabins. cruise area: Surin, Similan, Hin Daeng/Muang, Krabi. Small, family-run operation. 3- and 4-day trips to Surin and Similan. Includes diving, tanks, weights, weight belt, all meals, water, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, fruits and some snacks.

Santana Diving Co., Ltd. / MV Discovery (011) 66-76-294-220 web: www.santanaphuket.com specs: 92 feet, 16 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Similan Islands, Koh Bon, Koh Ta Chai, Richelieu Rock (Thailand, Andaman Sea), Mergui Archipelago. Packages include 8 days, 9 nights to the Similar Islands, air-conditioned twin bed cabins, full board, 3 dives a day and 1 night dive. Scuba Quest / MV Faah Yai (011) 76-385-143 web: www.scuba-quest.de specs: 74 feet, 10 passengers, 5 cabins, cruise area: Thailand, Similan/Surin, Hin Daeng Hin-Muang and Mergui Archipelago. Air-conditioned en suite facilities. 7- to 10-day liveaboard cruises to Burma's Mergui Archipelago, includes Cabusa Islands on 10-day cruises. Scubacat Diving / MV Scuba

Adventure and MV Scuba Cat

(011) 66-76-293-120 web: www.

scubacat.com specs: 84 feet, 12 passengers, 7 cabins, cruise area: Similan and Surin islands. In business for nine years. Seaplane for spotting whale sharks. package: MV Scuba Adventure-4 days, 4 nights, air-conditioned twin cabins, to the Similan and Surin islands, Koh Bon, Koh Tachai and Richelieu Rock, US\$560. MV Scuba Cat-to the Similan Islands, 2 days, 1 night US\$209

Siam Dive 'n Sail / MV Short Cut II (011) 66-76-330-967 web: www. siamdivers.com specs: 97 feet, 15 passengers, 7 cabins. cruise area: Thailand and Burma. package: 3to 7-day Thailand or Burma trips, double and single cabins, not en suite, from US\$400 p.p.

Siam Dive 'n Sail / Genesis (011) 66-76-330-967 web: www.siamdivers.com specs: 85 feet, 12 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Thailand, Similan Islands and Richelieu Rock. package: 6-day Thailand cruises, includes unlimited diving, accommodations onboard, all meals, from US\$1,440; single and double cabins available

Siam Dive 'n Sail / Mermaid (011) 66-76-330-967 web: www.siam divers.com specs: 93 feet, 11 passengers, 6 cabins. cruise area: Similan Islands, Richelieu Rock, Mergui Archipelago. package: 4 days to Thailand, Similan Islands and Richelieu Rock or 5 days to Merqui Archipelago, includes en suite air-conditioned cabins, divemaster, most beverages, 3-4 dives per day, from US\$990 p.p.; double and twin accommodations available

Siam Dive 'n Sail / Mermaid II (011) 66-76-330-967 web: www.siamdivers. com specs: 100 feet, 16 passengers 8 cabins cruise area: Similan Bichelieu Bock Hin Daeng package: 4 days, 4 nights, includes all meals, divergaster, 4 dives per day, hotel transfers, accommodations in twin-bed cabins, 2 cabins share bathroom/shower, from US\$660.

Siam Dive 'n Sail / Rhapsody (011) 66-76-330-967 web: www.siamdivers. com specs: 85 feet, 8 passengers, 4 cabins. cruise area: Similan Islands, Ko Bon, Ko Tachai, Richelieu Rock. package: 4 days to Similan and Richelieu Rock, including en suite air-conditioned cabins, all meals, divemaster, most drinks, hotel pick-up, from US\$699 p.p.

South East Asia Liveaboards Co., Ltd. (011) 66-76-340-406 web: www.seal-asia.com specs: 65 feet, 8 passengers, 5 cabins. cruise area: Mergui Archipelago and Myanmar. We pioneered diving the Mergui Archipelago. package: 7 days, 8 nights to the Mergui Archipelago and Myanmar, US\$1,627 p.p., plus US\$140 for Myanmar visa and entry permit. Does not include airfare, hotel accommodations, dive gear rental or alcohol.

TURKS & CAICOS Grand Turk / Salt Cay

Peter Hughes Diving, Inc. / Wind Dancer (800) 932-6237, (305) 669-9391 web: www.peterhughes.com specs: 120 feet, 20 passengers, 10 staterooms. cruise area: Grand Turk, Salt Cay, Long Cay, South Caicos and, weather permitting, French Cay and West Caicos, package: From Sept. 14. 2003, until Jan. 10, 2004, weeklong packages are \$1,695.

TURKS & CAICOS Provo

M/V Caribbean Explorer (800) 322-3577, (903) 887-8521 web: www.explorerventures.com specs: 100 feet, 16 passengers, 8 cabins. cruise area: Provo, West Caicos, French Cay. Comfortable accommodations and family-style customer service at an affordable price, 7-night, 8-day expeditions from Provo to West Caicos and French Cay, starting fall 2003.

Turks & Caicos Aggressor II (800) 348-2628, (985) 385-2628 web: www.aggressor.com ■ specs: 110 feet, 20 passengers, 9 cabins, cruise area: Provo, West Caicos and French Cay, whale charters at the Silver Banks in February and March. We've been diving the Turks & Caicos since 1992. Snorkel with whales on humpback whale charters. package: 7-day diving packages from \$1,295 p.p., quad. occ.; \$1,995 p.p., dbl. occ.; add \$200 for whale charters.



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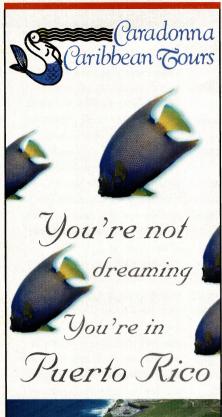
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Humacao

Candelero Resort at Palmas del Mar

8 days / 7 nights Price *1024 Includes 5 day 2-tank boat diving Theracus 5 day 2-talik 100d tiving 5th Night Free, Full American Breakfast for paid individu-als in room, upgrade based on availability and 50% Off children's camp. Valid May 1, 2003 – December 22, 2003

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Packages include tax and service fees. Transfers not included.

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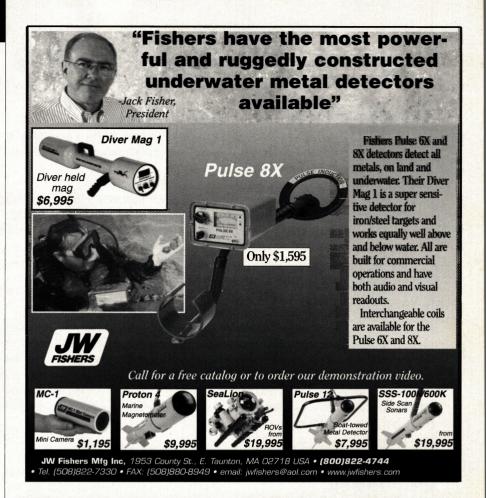
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URGENT SAFETY RECALL NOTICE

PADI recently issued a recall notice for select Recreational Dive Planners (RDP). Errors by the printer caused inaccurate or missing numbers on RDPs shipped between 1 June 2002 and 31 January 2003. Please note not all RDPs shipped during this period contain errors.

While analysis of the misprints shows that the risk of injury from errors is remote, for the sake of safety, we ask that you immediately check any RDP that you purchased or received during this period. Instructions on how to check your RDP(s) and a complete list of specific product numbers and production codes is located at http://www.padi.com/rdprecall or you may take your RDP to any PADI Dive Center or Resort for a free replacement.

DO NOT PLAN YOUR DIVES USING ANY OF THESE TABLES.

In the United States and Canada, you may call our toll free number at 866-698-0974 or worldwide visit http://www.padi.com/rdprecall or write us at the address below for more information on this recall:

PADI

Attn: RDP Recall 30151 Tomas Street Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688



In Depth: NO-NONSENSE BCs

Other BCs Tested

DUI INTREPID CLASSIC

PRICE: \$478, \$538 with weight system. COM-**MENTS:** Nicely finished with excellent padding, a neck roll and two built-in retractors. Stable at depth. Good ascent control. The power inflator is efficient, but awkward in the hand. Designed to be used with DUI's Weight & Trim 2 system.

GENESIS CAYMAN

PRICE: \$300. COMMENTS: Good basic BC. Lightweight, with no padding except on the cummerbund. Nice big pockets. Good flow rates. Power inflator very comfortable in the hand. Bladder inflates away from the body.

GENESIS COBRA

PRICE: \$390. COMMENTS: Comfortable. Good padding. No body squeeze. Two nonreleasing trim weight pockets. Stable at depth. Efficient flow rates allow for very good ascent control. Ergonomic power inflator. Roomy pockets.

H20DYSSEY SPORTPAK

PRICE: \$239. COMMENTS: Lots of padding. No body squeeze, but depth-compensating cummerbund has too much elastic. Power inflator fits comfortably in hand. Very good ascent control. Pockets are accessible but shallow. Two nonditch trim weight pouches.

INTERNATIONAL DIVERS PARAGON

PRICE: \$329. COMMENTS: Huge pockets. Nicely padded in back and lumbar regions. Good buoyant lift, even in small sizes. Respectable flow rates, but power inflator is awkward to handle. Stable at depth. Very good ascent control.

OCEANIC OCEANPRO

PRICE: \$299. COMMENTS: Minimal padding, but still comfortable. An efficient power inflator is shaped to fit nicely in a hand and contributes to good ascent control. Stable at depth. No body squeeze. Pockets are roomy, but hard to opentoo much Velcro.

SHERWOOD MAGNUM

PRICE: \$375. COMMENTS: Fits great. Good padding. A semi-hard backpack offers both stability and comfort. No body squeeze. Two nonditchable trim weight pouches. An ergonomic power inflator and very good air flow rates provide above-average ascent control. Good pocket volume.

SHERWOOD SILHOUETTE

PRICE: \$300. COMMENTS: Bare-bones BC. Lightweight, with virtually no padding. No body squeeze either. Very good flow rates. An efficient power inflator fits nicely in the hand. Huge, accessible pockets. Optional sternum strap is a must.

TRIPLE-L TAURUS

PRICE: \$289. COMMENTS: Nicely finished. Comfortable, although chest strap is too high. Lowprofile inflator fits nicely in hand and big buttons are easy to use, but overall air flow performance is only fair. Stable at depth. Very good ascent control is helped by two remote exhausts. Great price.

Will Your BC Float You Face-up?

Whether or not a BC floats a diver face-up on the surface is dependent on many variables not related to the BC itself, including:

- Your starting position, whether it be under water, on the surface, or on your side, back or front.
- The type of exposure suit you're wearing.
- Your individual size and shape and the state of your personal body buoyancy.
- Surface water conditions.
- The size and type of tank you're using and the amount of air in it.
- The distribution of ballast weight. This is by far the most critical factor. Loading the majority of your ballast weight in back will float you face-up with almost any BC. Of course, it will also cause you to be unstable at depth, reducing your efficiency, comfort and safety. And then when all is said and done, it still will not guarantee that you'll float face-up with your mouth out of the water if you happen to surface unconscious.

Bottom line: A BC is not designed to be a life jacket. So don't count on it to act like one.

Balancing Your Buoyancy What do you really need?

On the surface: When inflated halfway (allowing for a reserve for rough conditions or emergencies), your BC should provide enough lift to float you with your head comfortably out of the water while wearing a full complement of gear, including tanks and ballast weight, without requiring fin kicks or hand movements to maintain this position.

Under water: Your BC's available buoyant lift should surpass the maximum weight you use plus the at-depth weight of your full tank, while again allowing a reserve for emergencies and to compensate for the loss of buoyancy due to wetsuit compression.

In your dive store: Select a BC with enough lift to allow you to control your buoyancy in the above situations. Example: If you use 20 pounds of ballast weight and a full tank that weighs six pounds in the water, then your BC should have a buoyant lift in excess of 26 pounds (to avoid having to inflate your BC fully during normal use, which can be uncomfortable).

Correct buoyant lift is as important as correct fit. Less may not provide enough reserve for emergencies, and more may not only be a waste but could prevent efficient operation of the BC.

VARIANCES IN BUOYANT LIFT Between manufacturers' claims and ScubaLab measurements

(+) = Measured buoyant lift is higher than manufacturer claims (-) = Measured buoyant lift is lower than manufacturer claims

NO VARIANCE	1 – 10%	11 – 20%	21%+		
GENESIS COBRA	DACOR RAV (+)	IDI PARAGON (-)	H20DYSSEY SPORTPAK (-		
	DUI INTREPID CLASSIC (-)	SEAQUEST PRO (-)	OCEANIC OCEANPRO (-)		
	GENESIS CAYMAN (+)		TRIPLE-L TAURUS (-)		
	MARES VECTOR ORIGIN (+)	February Indian			
	SCUBAPRO GLIDE (-)				
	SEAQUEST PRO (-)				
	SHERWOOD MAGNUM (-)	Control of the second			
	SHERWOOD SILHOUETTE (+)				

NOTE: Due to differences in how BCs are tested for buoyant lift and the fact that BCs vary in the flexible material in which they are made, a 10 percent variance between claimed and measured lift capacities is considered reasonable, and up to a 20 percent variance is not unusual. But a variance greater than 20 percent means the manufacturer is not providing reasonably useful data to divers who need accurate buoyant lift figures to make sure the BC they choose actually meets their individual diving needs.

BC FEATURES									
IANUFACTURER & MODEL	WARRANTY	SIZES	BUOYANT LIFT (mfr. claimed)	POCKETS W/ CLOSURES	BACKPACK	TANK BANDS	CARRY HANDLE	TANK POSITION STRAP	REMOTE EXHAUST VALVE
DACOR RAV	1 YR.	5	11-32.5 LBS.	1 ZIPPERED	HARD	1	NO	YES	2
DUI INTREPID CLASSIC	3 YRS.	4	28-45 LBS.	3 ZIPPERED	SOFT	2	YES	YES	2
GENESIS CAYMAN	2 YRS.	5	21-36 LBS.	2 VELCRO	HARD	1	YES	YES	1
GENESIS COBRA	2 YRS.	6	21-35 LBS.	1 ZIPPERED, 2 VELCRO	HARD	1	NO	YES	1
H20DYSSEY SPORTPAK	1 YR.	6	25-45 LBS.	2 VELCRO	HARD	1	NO	YES	1
INTL. DIVERS PARAGON	LIFETIME	4	30-50 LBS.	2 ZIPPERED	HARD	1	YES	YES	1
MARES VECTOR ORIGIN	1 YR.	5	20-34 LBS.	1 ZIPPERED, 1 OVERFLAP	HARD	1	YES	YES	2
OCEANIC OCEANPRO	2 YRS.	6	20-48 LBS.	2 VELCRO	HARD	1	YES	NO ·	1
SCUBAPRO GLIDE 500	2 YRS.	6	22-40 LBS.	2 VELCRO	HARD	1	YES	YES	2
SEAQUEST PRO	Ltd.LIFETIME	6	21-54 LBS.	2 ZIPPERED	HARD	1	YES	NO	2
SHERWOOD MAGNUM	2 YRS.	5	20-36 LBS.	2 ZIPPERED	SEMI-HARD	2	NO	YES	1
SHERWOOD SILHOUETTE	2 YRS.	6	17-40 LBS.	2 VELCRO	HARD	1	YES	YES	1
TRIPLE-L TAURUS	1 YR.	5	26-48.5 LBS.	2 VELCRO	HARD	1+	YES	YES	2

					FORMA	NCE
MANUFACTURER & MODEL	ASCENT COME	Sample &	MUFORD	COMPONE &	ASSEMBLY	A POCHIS &
DACOR RAV	4	4	4	4	5	4
DUI INTREPID CLASSIC	4	4	3	3	3	4
GENESIS CAYMAN	4	4	4	3	4	3
GENESIS COBRA	4	4	4	4	4	3
H20DYSSEY SPORTPAK	4	3	4	3	4	3
INTL. DIVERS PARAGON	4	4	3	4	4	5
MARES VECTOR ORIGIN	4	4	5	4	4	3
OCEANIC OCEANPRO	4	4	4	4	4	3
SCUBAPRO GLIDE 500	4	5	4	4	4	4
SEAQUEST PRO	4	5	4	5	4	4
SHERWOOD MAGNUM	4	4	4	4	3	3
SHERWOOD SILHOUETTE	4	4	4	4	4	4
TRIPLE-L TAURUS	4	4	4	4	3	4

RATING SYSTEM 5 = EXCELLENT 4 = VERY GOOD 3 = GOOD 2 = FAIR 1 = POOR

	VALVE FLOW RATES		
VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	
DACOR RAV	DUI INTREPID CLASSIC	SEAQUEST PRO	
GENESIS CAYMAN	H20DYSSEY SPORTPAK	TRIPLE-L TAURUS	
GENESIS COBRA	IDI PARAGON		
MARES VECTOR ORIGIN	OCEANIC OCEANPRO		
SHERWOOD MAGNUM	SCUBAPRO GLIDE 500		
SHERWOOD SILHOUETTE	term and the second second		

NOTE: Scoring is based on the ability of the deflate valves to flow air faster than the power inflator.

PERFORMANCE CHART EXPLANATIONS

Over the past 10 years, as a result of 19 separate BC evaluations, ScubaLab has established a test protocol in which specific ergonomic elements are evaluated in order to extract data based on a testing standard rather than on general impressions. Here's how it breaks down, starting with those functions deemed most important to the safe operation of a BC and then moving toward more convenience items.

MOST IMPORTANT

ASCENT CONTROL: An evaluation of how easily the BC can be used to control a normal ascent. ATTITUDE AND STABILITY: Evaluated to determine if the BC will keep the diver in the proper swimming position without wobbling or tending to turn the diver over.

MODERATELY IMPORTANT

VALVE OPERATION: Evaluated by the ease with which a diver can find and use the oral and power inflators, the oral deflate, the pull dump and the remote exhaust valve(s).

COMFORT AND ADJUSTMENT: Checked both in and out of the water with BC strapped to a tank.

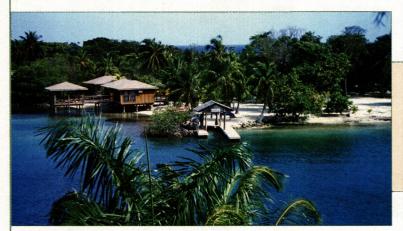
CONVENIENCE ELEMENTS

ASSEMBLY: Performed on deck without instructions. Although we believe all BCs should be supplied with clear and complete instructions, we also know that most divers will not take the instructions with them on a dive trip.

POCKETS & ATTACHMENTS: Tested in and out of the water, an evaluation of how easy or difficult it is to access and use pockets, D-rings, etc. All available methods of securing hoses are also tested.

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Anthony's Key Resort best bet in the bay islands

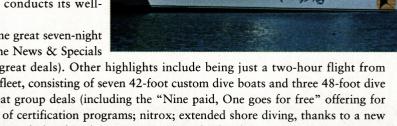


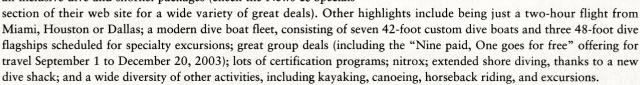
If you want the best bet in the Bay Islands and Roatan, head to Anthony's Key Resort. With consistently high rankings from Rodale's Scuba Diving readers and incredibly high repeat diver figures, Anthony's Key Resort continues to be a key choice in the Bay Islands.

The Resort

Nestled in the midst of a hillside jungle overlooking the Caribbean, the resort sprawls from the tropical hills down to a lagoon with two private palm-covered islets called Anthony's Key and Bailey's Key. Accessible by taxi boat and a one-minute ride, Anthony's Key Resort offers wooden cabanas (with and without airconditioning) on the edge of the lagoon by the dock and up on a hill. Nearby, there's a small sandy area with lounge chairs, beach volleyball, and watersports, as well as Bailey's Key, which is where Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences (RIMS) conducts its wellknown dolphin encounter programs (see below).

This PADI Gold Palm IDC resort offers some great seven-night all-inclusive dive and snorkel packages (check the News & Specials

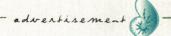






The Diving

Roatan diving is world-class and Anthony's Key Resort makes it even better. The visibility typically ranges from 75 to 100 feet and average water temperature is around 78 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit. More than 35 distinct dive sites are within 10 to 20 minutes of the resort, including the new 300' Odyssey wreck resting on a sandy flat in 112' of water. Depending on their skill levels, divers may follow the top of the mast at 30' and descend to the top of the bow at 70', then explore the bulwarks or cargo hole at 80', the bow at 105', and the stern at 112'. The possibilities also include reefs, walls, ledges, caves, tunnels, holes, walls, wrecks, sand chutes, eel gardens, night diving, shore diving, and a wide variety of fish and coral. The weekly



diving schedule typically calls for three boat dives each day and two night dives during your week stay. Along with nitrox, there's training from resort courses to IDC.



Discovering Dolphins

The Institute for Marine Sciences at Anthony's Key Resort offers a unique opportunity for divers and snorkelers to interact with the fascinating mammals on their initiative. The encounters are unique in that the dolphins are free to come and go as they wish (no feeding enticement to secure interaction with humans—the interaction is achieved by simply appealing to the natural curiosity of dolphins).

A number of programs are available, including a Dolphin Specialty Course, the Dolphin Dive, the Dolphin Snorkel, a regular Dolphin Presentation (free to guests), and a week-long Dolphin Discovery Camp for Children. The very popular and successful camp includes SASY, Bubblemakers, Jr. Certification programs, lots of interaction opportunities, snorkeling, marine life slide shows, classroom sessions, and dolphin identification, anatomy, evolution, and physiology lectures.

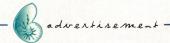
The resort is constantly updating and improving amenities and services. Recently, this has included converting four rooms to air-conditioned suites and adding a new dive shack shore diving facility. Maybe that's why Rodale's Scuba Diving readers keep coming back for more!



ANTHONY'S KEY RESORT

800-443-0717 www.anthonyskey.com

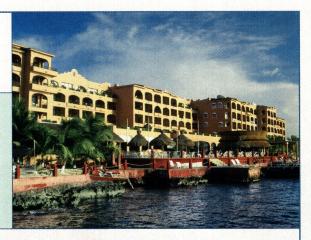




Plaza Las Glorias

The Cozumel Connection

As a consistent Readers' Choice winner, Plaza Las Glorias welcomes returning Rodale's Scuba Diving readers regularly, thanks to an array of draws. These include the oceanfront deluxe hotel's location (the only one within walking distance of downtown), all oceanfront junior suite accommodations, and full-service on-site restaurants and others nearby.



Featuring Mexican Caribbean-style junior suites with in-room refrigerators and private balconies overlooking the Caribbean, Plaza Las Glorias also offers a private beach, an oceanside freshwater pool with a swim-up bar and whirlpool tub, a very popular outside palapa restaurant/bar, and a formal restaurant option. It's a great place to spend topside time.

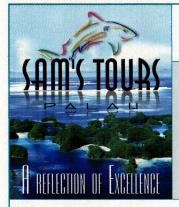
And, of course, there's Cozumel's legendary diving! Dive Paradise, for nearly 20 years, the "Name You Know and Trust" on Cozumel, services diving guests at the Plaza with diver pickup right at the hotel's pier. Dive Paradise is a PADI 5-Star Gold Palm facility and owns the island's largest fleet of boats, and you can count on them to show you the best of Cozumel diving!

contact:

BAY ADVENTURES

888-599-3483 www.bayadventures.com

Bay Adventures' special offer for 2003: 7 nights at Plaza las Glorias, with 5 days of 2-tank morning boat diving and 4 single-tank afternoon boat dives (subject to holiday restrictions), just \$599/person double occupancy, including tax.



Sam's Tours - Palau

Rodale's Scuba Diving readers repeatedly rank Palau's Sam's Tours as Micronesia's top dive operator. Launched by Sam Scott more than 12 years ago, the popular dive operation is recognized for consistently delivering excellent service, safety, and value to their guests. A seasoned and knowledgeable team of marine biologists, trained naturalists, underwater photographers, and PADI and IANTD instructors assure Sam's guests of Palau's very best diving experience.

Sam's Tours is also home to KD Photo by Kevin Davidson, Palau's premier photographer, videographer and Nikonos expert. There's also Palau Technical Divers with PADI Master Instructor, IANTD Instructor, and veteran Palau dive guide, Matthew Young, as well as Planet Blue Kayak Tours, which was founded by long-term Sam's staff member and marine biologist Ron Leidich.

In further recognition of the high standards of quality and service guests are provided, Sam's Tours was recently selected by European training agency NRC Nitrox and Rebreather College to become the exclusive NRC Instructor Training Center in Micronesia. "We are honored to have been selected by NRC Nitrox and Rebreather College as their flagship center in Micronesia and look forward to offering Nitrox diving as an affordable standard for all our guests in the seasons ahead," said

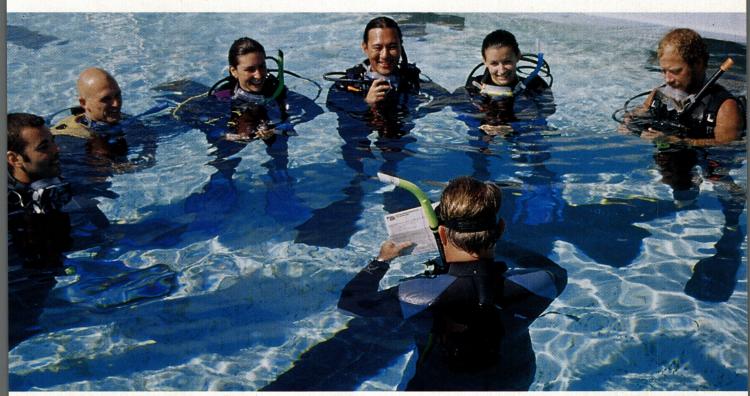
Sam Scott. "It's another continued step to improve service, value and offer increased diving safety to our guests."

Sam's Tours is a fully-appointed PADI Five-Star IDC Center offering authorized sales, service, and rental of quality Scubapro and AquaLung equipment. As a DAN Business Member, Sam's recommends that all divers become insured members of DAN, "Your Partner in Safety."

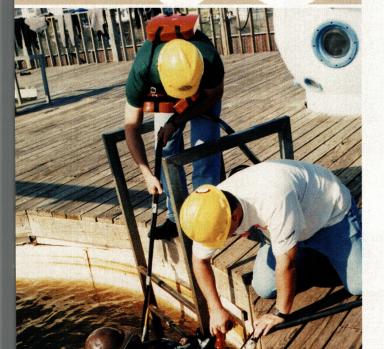
contact:

SAM'S TOURS - PALAU

www.samstours.com samsinfo@palaunet







DIVING

If you truly love being under water, then a career in diving may just be for you. Underwater careers are incredibly varied, meaning you can utilize the unique skills you'll learn at a specialized school to find a job practically anywhere in the world - in fact, your potential "office" covers three-quarters of the world's surface.

Your dream job can be more than just a dream, thanks to several top-notch schools that specialize in training divers for the worlds of recreational and commercial diving. With the help of these programs, dedicated divers can learn the specialized skills it takes to succeed in one of these worlds.

Those who turn their dream into reality will have diving as a main part of every work week, rather than just a part of occasional vacations. The jobs are definitely available for those who are willing to pursue the training to qualify for them.

RECREATIONAL DIVING: TEACHING OTHERS TO DIVE AND SO MUCH MORE

When you stop by your local dive shop or go on a dive vacation, do you dream of being that person behind the counter or on the boat? With the right training, it's easy to pursue a such a career.

Whether it's through a local store or at some far-flung dive resort, divemasters

or instructors are generally the public's first and most frequent contact with diving. From teaching open water courses to leading dives around the world, recreational diving can be a career that satisfies the wet at heart.

The wide range of opportunities in the world of recreational diving includes: different levels of instruction; guiding dives; day-boat staff; live-aboard staff; shop employment in various capacities; marketing; photography; videography; writing; and much more.

After open water certification (advanced certification and sometimes even open water are often included in school training), the next step toward a career in recreational diving is to contact the various training agencies and schools. They can send information about their programs and their web sites can also provide a wealth of information.

The schools available to those interested in a career in recreational diving vary in many ways. Factors to consider

include: school location; training waters; boats used; types of programs offered; length and intensity of programs; role-playing opportunities; home study possibilities; class sizes; instructor-to-student ratios; on-the-job experience opportunities; financial aid programs; and placement services. It's definitely best to contact several to make the best choice for your particular circumstances and goals.

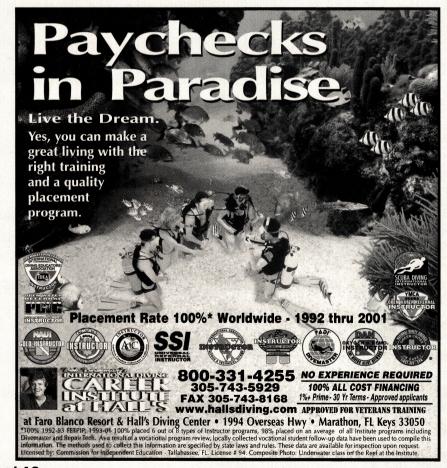
Some schools are even located at a dive resort, giving students the opportunity to use real cash registers, serve actual customers, answer the phone, use and service equipment, fill tanks, and learn other everyday duties. This "real world" training is hard to beat!

Today's programs concentrate on required skills and mastering new technologies (e.g., deep technical diving and using rebreathers). This enhances textbook, pool, and open water education. From conducting certification classes to running a dive operation, a diploma from one of these schools opens the door to a new world above and below the surface. In fact, several schools offer a job placement guarantee to their graduates. It's just a matter of choosing the right program and diving in!

But passing the Instructor Exam (IE) and earning the Open Water Scuba Instructor (OWSI) rating is just the beginning for many recreational diving pros. In fact, many in the industry view the rating as being similar to Open Water Diver certification — it's just the beginning of what can be a lifetime of training and career growth. Many schools can provide hands-on training and experience to teach various specialty courses because the more you can teach, the more you can earn!

COMMERCIAL DIVING: WORKING UNDER WATER

Virtually anywhere there's water, there's typically a need for commercial divers, whether it's in oceans, rivers, lakes, containment ponds, or elsewhere. With more than 250 marine construction and contracting firms in the U.S. and about 350 diving contractors working overseas, it's a far-flung and reaching field.



The work is as varied as the waters of the world. The opportunities in commercial diving include, but aren't limited to: underwater construction and other work; marine environmental control testing; platform construction, maintenance,

and removal; drilling and blasting; salvage; seismic surveying; sewage (and other) line installation and maintenance; trenching; underwater surveys; gravity surveying; oil rig work; using remotely controlled underwater vehicles; diving

> bell usage and maintenance; wellhead repair and maintenance; many medical fields; hyperbaric chamber work; and much more. Of course, the locations are as unique as the job opportunities, with the Gulf of Mexico, the South Pacific, the Mediterranean, and the North Sea just a few of the possibilities.

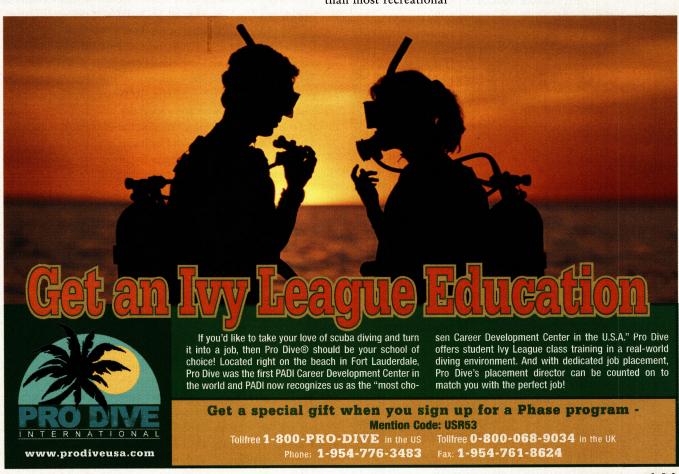
Naturally, commercial diving education is much more intense and lengthier than most recreational

diving programs. This includes up-todate theory, but it also features hands-on training and experience concerning specific underwater problem solving and work. There's also interesting topside work such as analyzing the results from underwater projects. The higher level of training required in commercial diving usually means more lucrative positions.

As with recreational diving education programs, it's best to check out all the options. Consider similar factors and ask lots of questions. For instance, is the school a member of the Association of Commercial Diving Educators (ACDE) and the Association of Diving Contractors (ADC).

Schools in the commercial diving field report that job opportunities are better than ever. With a wide range of specialized courses and programs, it's easy to find a specific field of interest, complete the training, and pursue a great career in commercial diving.





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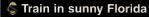
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INSTRUCTOR SCHOOLS



Pro Dive International®

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While offering the latest in education, only Pro Dive can certify you as a PADI ROS® graduate. ROS is the industry's only trademarked Resort Operations Specialty program designed for diving professionals seeking a career in the dive resort industry.

Pro Dive has a full-time Job Placement Director committed to providing lifetime placement services for instructor graduates. Pro Dive has trained and placed more instructors in the scuba industry than any other school (over 4,000 instructors worldwide).

800-PRO-DIVE (in the U.K. 0800-068-9034), info@prodiveusa.com, www.prodiveusa.com

Bob Brayman's International Diving Career Institute at Hall's

The Career Institute at Hall's provides training for serious dive professionals. For over 20 years, Hall's extensive training programs have gone far beyond the ordinary for employers. Hall's exclusive copyrighted programs include comprehensive Instructor/Divemaster training at a real dive center resort plus training in Rebreather, Technical, Diver Propulsion Vehicles, Wet Submarines, U/W Communications, Business Operations/Sales, Equipment Repair, Digital Photography/Videography, Computer Editing, etc. No previous experience is necessary. Courses last up to 14 weeks with complete certification following graduation. Financing is available for those who qualify. Hall's boasts a

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

"100% graduate job placement rate every year for the last ten consecutive years." 800-331-HALL, 305-743-5929, fax 305-743-8168, hallsdive@aol.com, www.hallsdiving.com

Scuba Emporium

Scuba Emporium has served the Chicago metropolitan area longer than any other dive center. Founded in 1974, Scuba Emporium is the oldest licensed facility in Illinois offering entry level through instructor programs, and was the first PADI Career Development Center in the Midwest. Scuba Emporium's two PADI 5-Star IDC centers both have swimming pools. With three course directors, a full-time staff, and on-site training pools, you can earn any rating at any time.

Phone 800-778-DIVE, fax 708-301-0293, Patrick@scubaemporium.com, www.scubaemporium.com

COMMERCIAL SCHOOLS

Commercial Diving Academy

Commercial Diving Academy is an outstanding training facility for offshore and inland commercial diving certification. We are located in Florida on the St. Johns River just miles from open ocean. Our divers train in 20-foot tanks for their initial dive orientation and quickly move into the river to train in a real world environment. The river is low visibility with strong tidal currents and depths to 40 feet, providing an ideal training condition. Our program exceeds the ACDE/ANSI standards for commercial diver certification and you are certified to work in only 16 weeks. Training is intensive and comprehensive (50 hours/week). Housing is provided.

1-888-974-2232, www.CommercialDivingAcademy.com, 8137 N. Main St., Jacksonville, FL 32208

The Ocean Corporation

Founded in 1969, The Ocean Corporation is located on a 4.2 acre campus in Houston, Texas, close to the hub of the world diving industry, the Gulf of Mexico. Training includes the Ultimate Diver Training course, which meets or exceeds the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards for entry-level commercial divers. This course also qualifies graduates for other careers, including Hazardous Materials, Non-Destructive Testing/Inspection, and Remotely Operated Vehicles. The school offers 30-week classes, and a new class starts every five weeks.

800-321-0298, fax 281-530-9143, admissions@oceancorp.com, www.oceancorp.com



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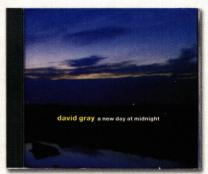
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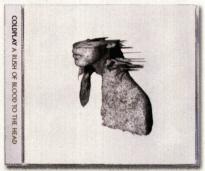
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David Gray / A New Day At Midnight / \$12.99



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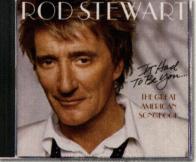
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1.800.914.9362

Refer to code 0141914 when ordering. www.rodalemusic.com

Special offer pricing does not include taxes or shipping and handling. Offer only available in the United States.

Rodale's

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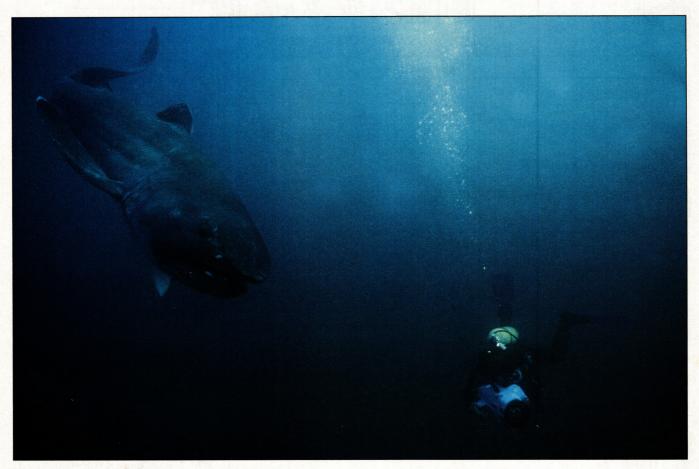
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-BRUCE RASNER

CAMERA AND SETTINGS: Nikonos V, 15mm wide-angle lens, single strobe, 1/60 sec. at f-5.6, Kodachrome 64.



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